~THE STRONGEST BRIDE ON EARTH~

SUMOMOMOMOMO

11

SHINOBU OHTAKA

すもももももも
The strongest bride on earth.
Sumomomo Momomo.11
Shinobu Ohtaka
地上最強のヨメ

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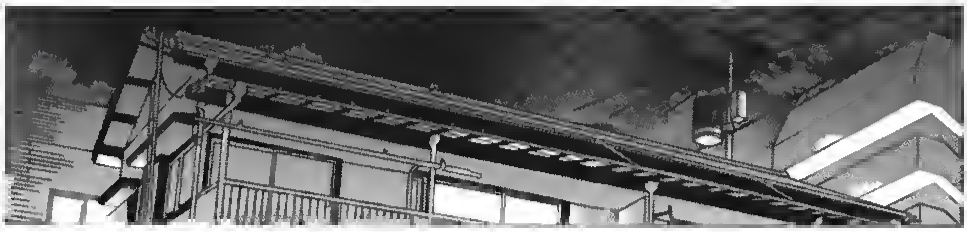
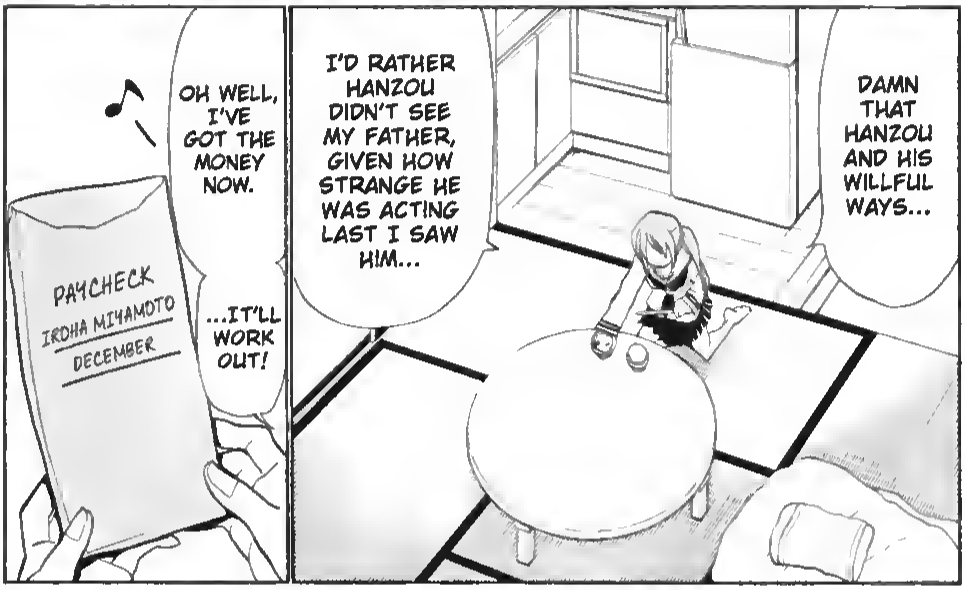
SUMOMOMO,MOMOMO

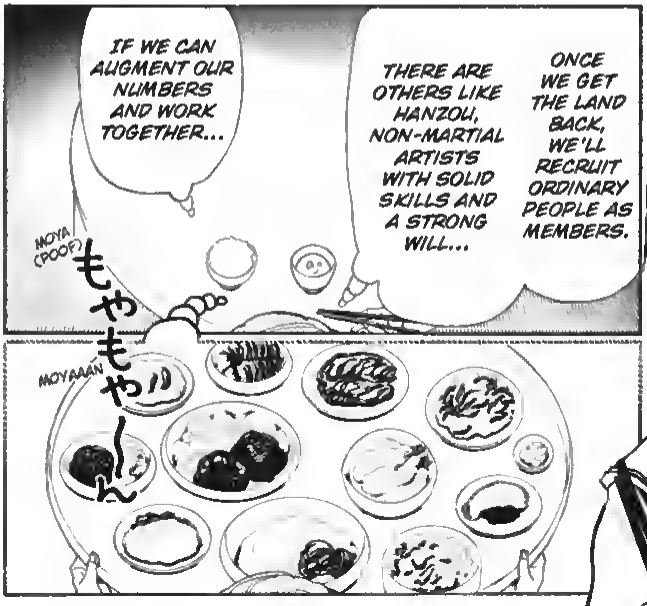
COME, COME! PLEASE, DIG IN!
A-ARE YOU SURE YOU WANT TO PAY FOR ALL OF THIS?
OF COURSE I AM...THIS IS A VERY SPECIAL DAY, AFTER ALL...
I HAVE FINALLY REACHED MY GOAL FOR THE FAMILY RESTORATION BUDGET!!
HUZZAH!
BE-HOLD !!
PAYCHECK
IROHA MIYAMOTO
DECEMBER
ジャン
JAN (TA-DAA)
EEEEK!
HEE HEE...
BACHA BACHA
バチャバチャ
BACHA (SPLOSH)
バチャッ
SENPAI, YOU SHOULD PUT THE ICE IN BEFORE THE SODA.
WANT SOMETHING FROM THE SODA FOUNTAIN, SENPAI?
HA-HA... YOU KNOW SHE DIDN'T COOK THAT, DON'T YOU?
I SEE. THIS FLAVOR IS EXQUISITE, IROHA-DONO!
NMM! NYUM!

IROHA-DONO... YOU ARE A RADIANT SIGHT TO BEHOLD.
.....
SO TODAY IS A SIGN OF MY APPRECIA-TION...
AND THE WHOLE REASON I WAS ABLE TO STRIVE FOR THIS DREAM WAS YOUR INSPIRA-TION!
HUH?
YOU TOO?
?
YES, INDEED!
I MUST FOLLOW YOUR OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE... AS A FELLOW FEMALE MARTIAL ARTIST!
SUCH DEVOTION AND ENTHUSIASM FOR YOUR CLAN!
SAY, WHERE IS HANZOU-DONO?
OH, HANZOU? HE LEFT A NOTE FOR ME LAST NIGHT...
in

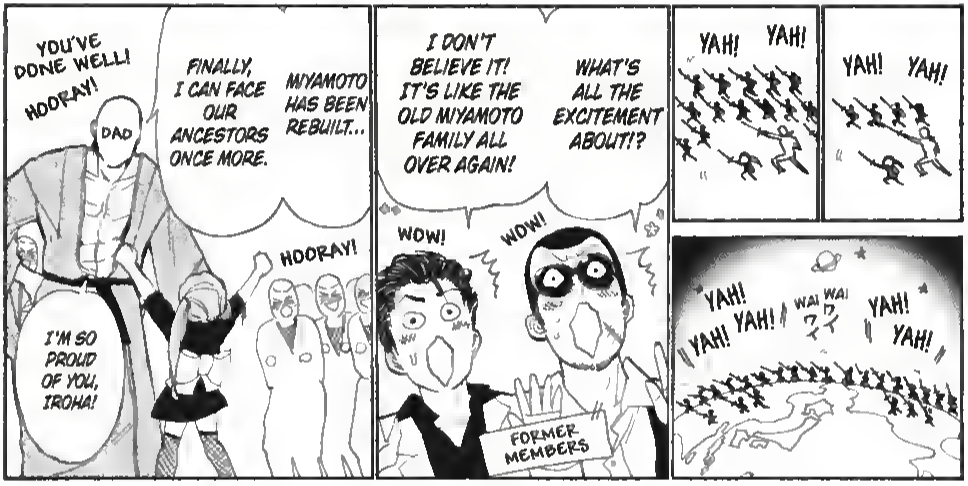
77. THE NEW MIYAMOTO CLAN



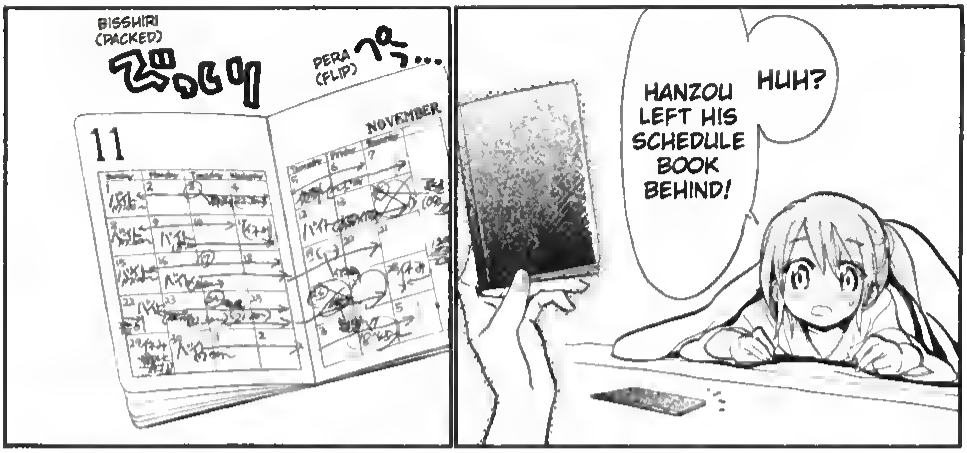

PAYCHECK
IROHA MIYAMOTO
DECEMBER
OH WELL, I'VE GOT THE MONEY NOW.
...IT'LL WORK OUT!
I'D RATHER HANZOU DIDN'T SEE MY FATHER, GIVEN HOW STRANGE HE WAS ACTING LAST I SAW HIM...
DAMN THAT HANZOU AND HIS WILLFUL WAYS...

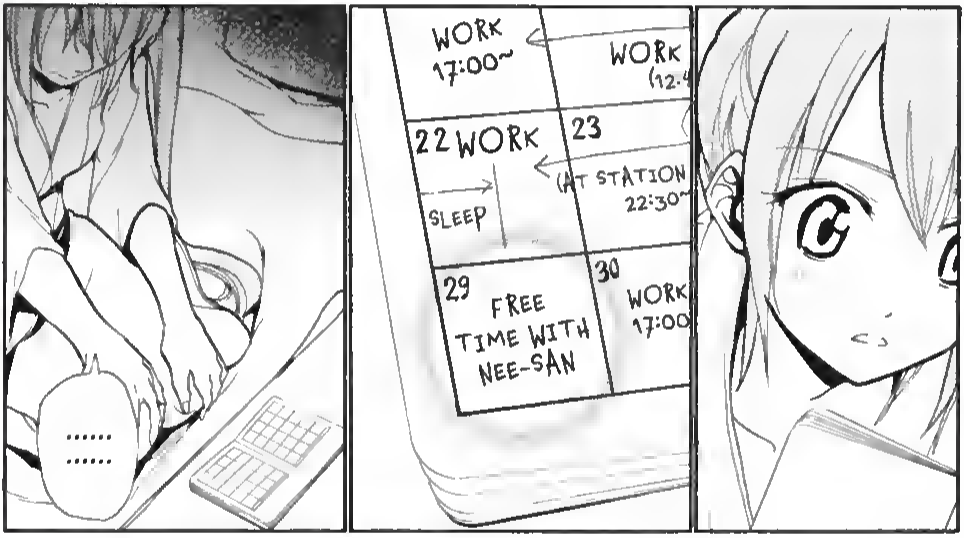

IF WE CAN AUGMENT OUR NUMBERS AND WORK TOGETHER...
THERE ARE OTHERS LIKE HANZOU, NON-MARTIAL ARTISTS WITH SOLID SKILLS AND A STRONG WILL...
ONCE WE GET THE LAND BACK, WE'LL RECRUIT ORDINARY PEOPLE AS MEMBERS.
MOYA (POOF)
もやもやーん
MOYAAAN

EAT UP AND GET READY TO TRAIN!
ALL RIGHT!!
WAI WAI (WHEE)
わ!! わ!!


YOU'VE DONE WELL!
HOORAY!
DAD
I'M SO PROUD OF YOU, IROHA!
FINALLY, I CAN FACE OUR ANCESTORS ONCE MORE.
MIYAMOTO HAS BEEN REBUILT...
HOORAY!
I DON'T BELIEVE IT! IT'S LIKE THE OLD MIYAMOTO FAMILY ALL OVER AGAIN!
WHAT'S ALL THE EXCITEMENT ABOUT!?
WOW!
WOW!
FORMER MEMBERS
YAH! YAH!
YAH! YAH!
YAH! YAH!
YAH! YAH!
WAI WAI ワイ ワイ
YAH! YAH!

WAKU (GIDDY) ワクワク WAKU
MIYA-MOTO!
SFX: GORO (ROLL) GORO GORO
SFX: WAKU WAKU WAKU
ワクワクワク
ゴロゴロ
ゴロゴロゴロ
MIYAMOTO
LONG LIVE MIYA-MOTO!
LONG LIVE MIYA-MOTO!
LONG LIVE MIYA-MOTO!


BISSHIRI (PACKED)
ぴっしり
PERA (FLIP)
ぺら…
11
NOVEMBER
HUH?
HANZOU LEFT HIS SCHEDULE BOOK BEHIND!


……
……
WORK 17:00~
WORK
22 WORK
23
(AT STATION 22:30~
SLEEP
29
FREE TIME WITH NEE-SAN
30
WORK 17:00

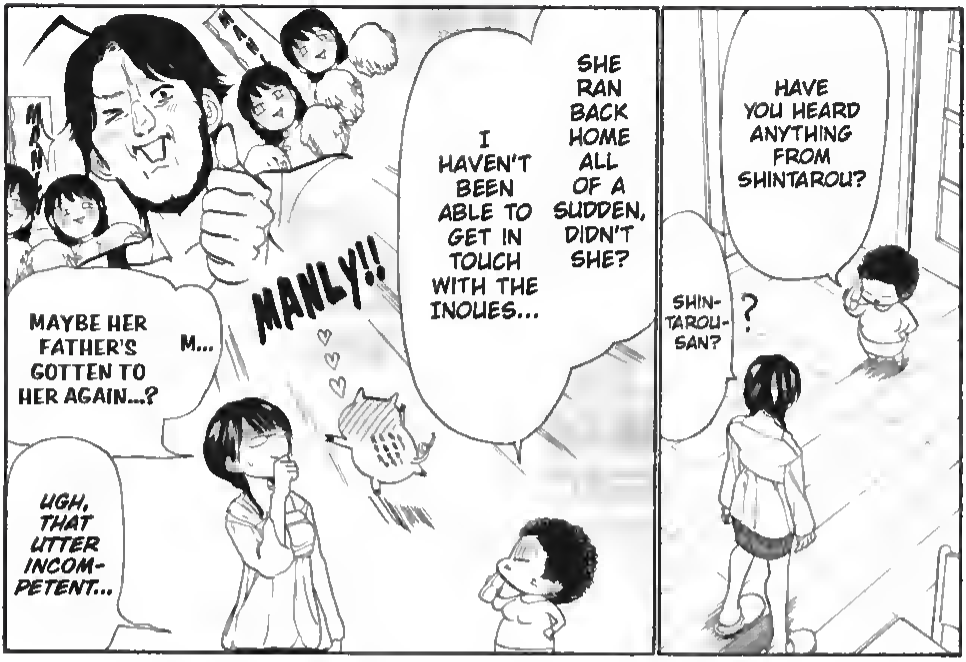
THE ONLY REASON I'VE MADE IT THIS FAR...
...IS BECAUSE HE WAS ALWAYS THERE AT MY SIDE...

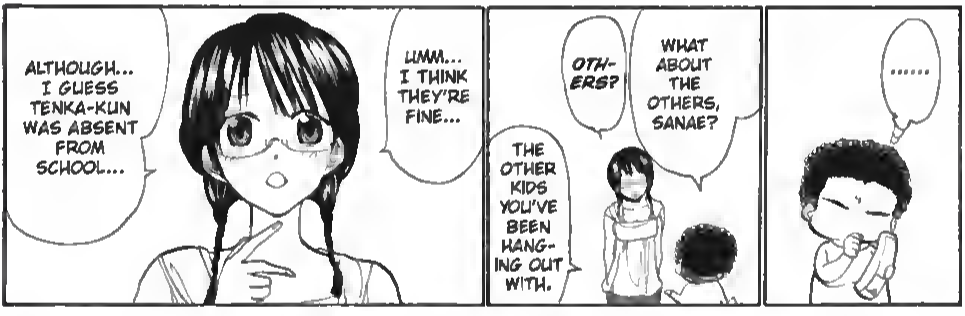
BANNERS (R-L): WOMEN, MEN
I'VE PUT HIM THROUGH A LOT OF GRIEF AND AGONY...
...AND I'M GOING TO MAKE IT UP TO HIM.
I WANT TO MAKE THINGS RIGHT FOR HIM.
キュポン KYUPON (POP)
ALL RIGHT.
.....

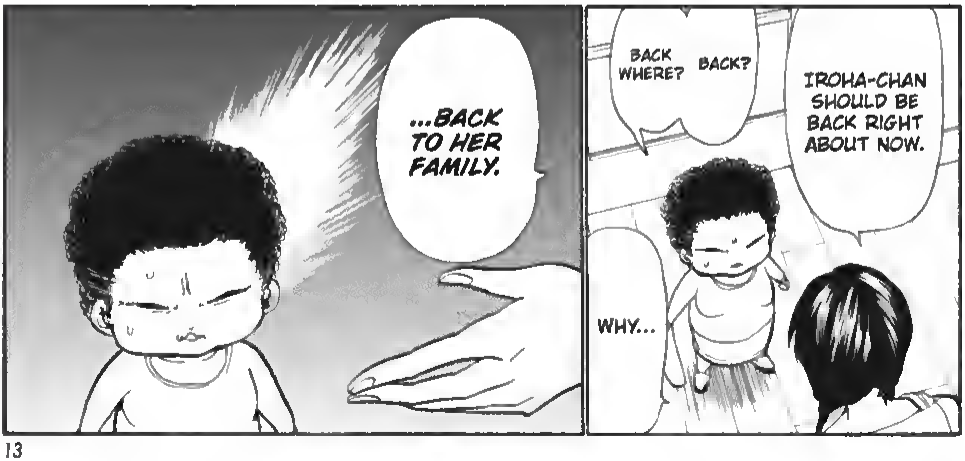
MAYBE THIS...
GURI (SQUIK)
GURI
GURI
PATAN (THUMP)
...WILL PUT A SMILE ON HIS FACE!
AND DONE!
THE NEXT DAY
TIME TO MAKE OUR DREAMS COME TRUE!

TIME TO GET THE NEW MIYAMOTO CLAN ON ITS FEET!
I'M OFF!!
PUAAN (HONK)

I WONDER...
...IF IROHA-CHAN'S MADE IT YET?
NO TIME TO SLACK OFF WHILE SHE'S BUSY!
IF THE CLAN IS RE-BUILT
YOU COULD COME OVER TO VISIT IF YOU WANT. AND I WOULDN'T KICK YOU OUT! HMPH!
HEE HEE...
SANAE... SANAE!
YES?
TRAINING TIME? I'M READY.
IT'S NOT THAT.


MANLY!!
MAYBE HER FATHER'S GOTTEN TO HER AGAIN...?
M...
UGH, THAT UTTER INCOM-PETENT...
I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO GET IN TOUCH WITH THE INOUES...
SHE RAN BACK HOME ALL OF A SUDDEN, DIDN'T SHE?
HAVE YOU HEARD ANYTHING FROM SHINTAROU?
SHIN-TAROU-SAN?
?


ALTHOUGH... I GUESS TENKA-KUN WAS ABSENT FROM SCHOOL....
UMM... I THINK THEY'RE FINE...
OTH-ERS?
WHAT ABOUT THE OTHERS, SANAE?
THE OTHER KIDS YOU'VE BEEN HANG-ING OUT WITH.
.....


...BACK TO HER FAMILY.
BACK WHERE?
BACK?
IROHA-CHAN SHOULD BE BACK RIGHT ABOUT NOW.
WHY...

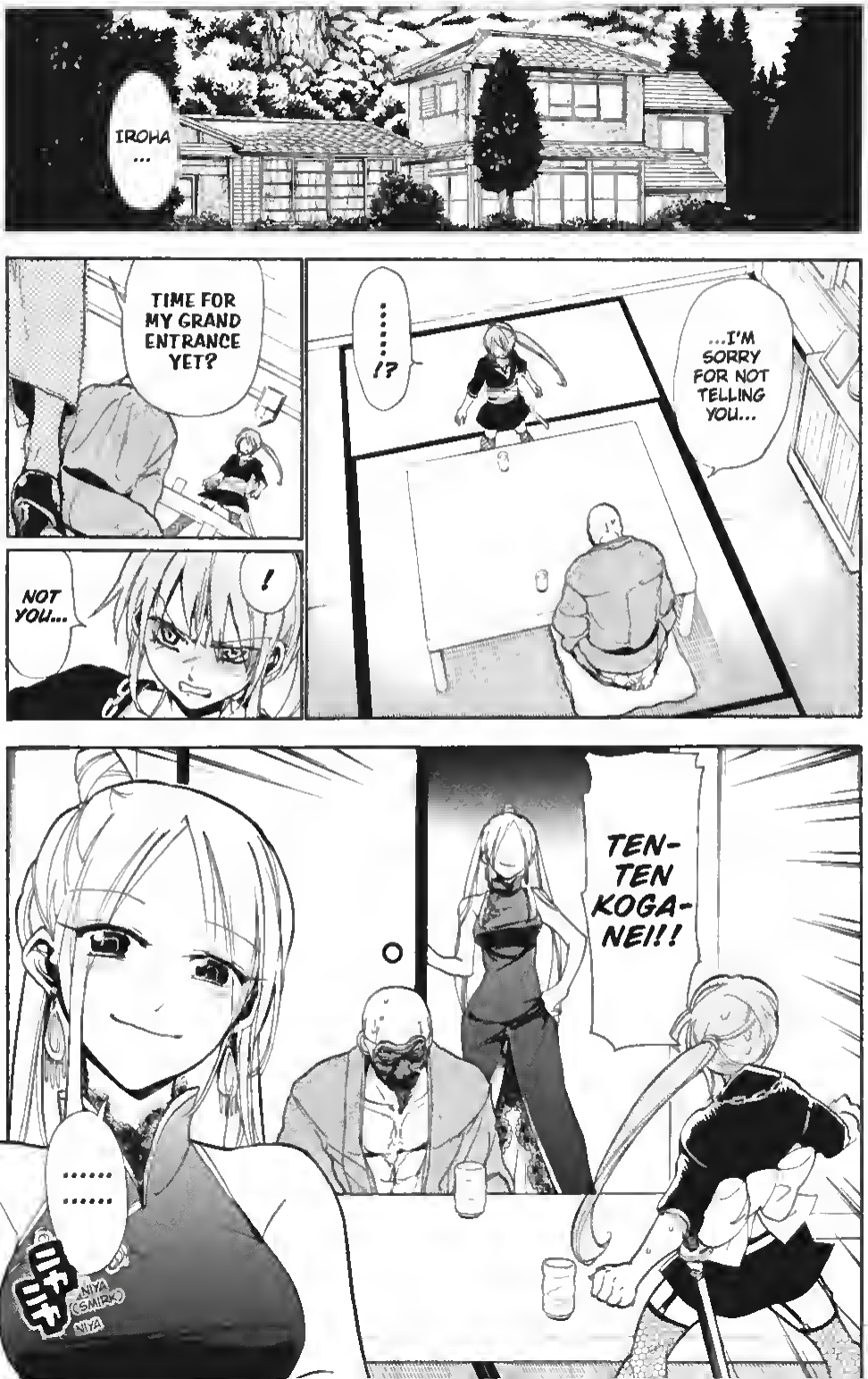
TA (TMP)
WE'VE GOT TO GO ...!
GO? GO WHERE?
JUST COME WITH ME!!
ガチャ!!
GACHA (CLACK)
TA
TA
203
KOGANEI
BATA (PATTER)
BATA
103

.....
.....

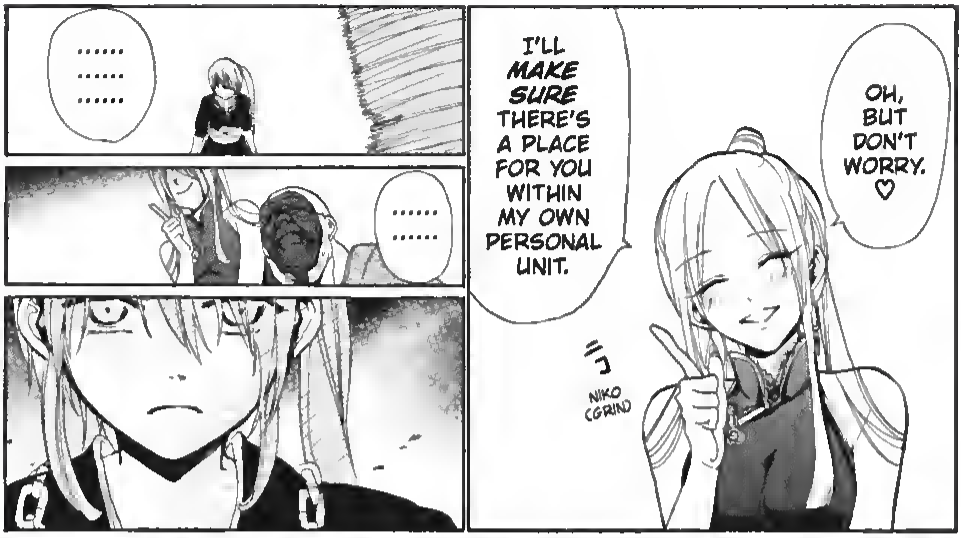
WHAT'S THIS...?

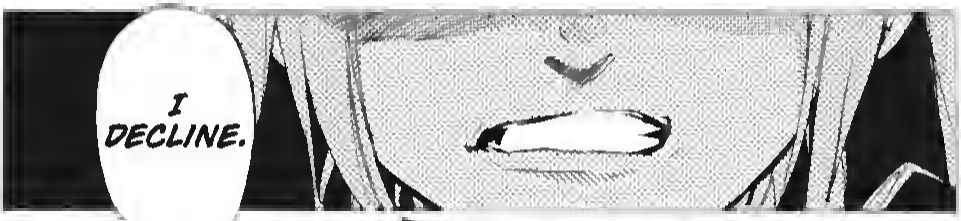
ゴオオ……
GOOO (WHOOO)
AS I FEARED... I HAVEN'T HAD WORD FROM THE MATOBA CLAN IN TWO DAYS EITHER.
SOMETHING DREADFUL IS AFOOT...!
AND IF IT'S ALL HAPPENING AT ONCE...
...THEN THIS... HAS BEEN PLANNED ...
...!?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN !?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN ...?

WE CAN RETAKE THE LAND, BUT NOT REVIVE THE CLAN?
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN!?
ANSWER ME, FATHER !!!
.....
.....


IROHA ...
TIME FOR MY GRAND ENTRANCE YET?
!
NOT YOU...
.....!?
...I'M SORRY FOR NOT TELLING YOU...
TEN-TEN KOGA-NEI!!
.....
.....
NIYA
SMIRK
NIYA

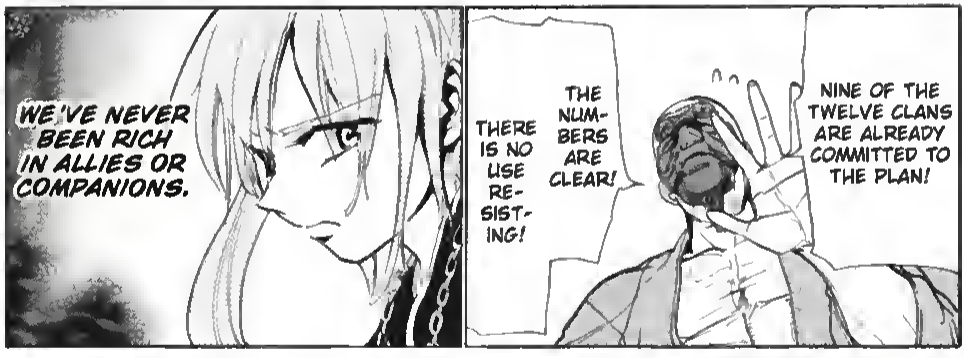
LISTEN TO ME, IROHA.
THE TWELVE HEAVENLY GENERALS... ARE COMING TOGETHER AS ONE...
...TO OVERTHROW INUZUKA AND KUZU-RYUU...
.....!?
AND THIS PLAN CALLS FOR THE VARIOUS MARTIAL ARTS FAMILIES...
...TO BE PLACED UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF A STRONG HAND FROM ABOVE...
THAT'S RIGHT!
AND I'M PART OF THAT "STRONG HAND."
BY THE WAY, HERE'S RULE #1 OF THE NEW MARTIAL ARTS ARMY:
FOR THE BLOOD OF THE PURE FAMILIES TO REMAIN STRONG...
...WE MUST PUT A STOP TO THE INTRO-DUCTION OF NON-MARTIAL ARTISTS INTO THE ARMY.
WHICH MEANS— GOSH, DARN!— YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO RECRUIT NEW MEMBERS.
I'M AFRAID THIS COULD BE THE END OF THE MIYAMOTO FAMILY.
ALAS...


.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
I'LL MAKE SURE THERE'S A PLACE FOR YOU WITHIN MY OWN PERSONAL UNIT.
OH, BUT DON'T WORRY. ♡
NIKO CGRIND


I DECLINE.

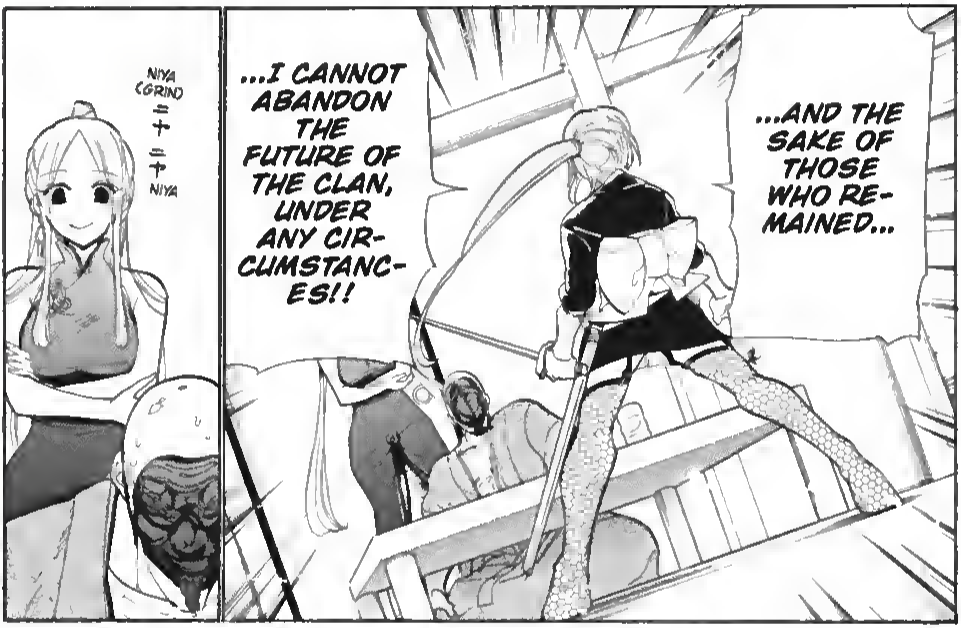
ZURA (SLIDE)

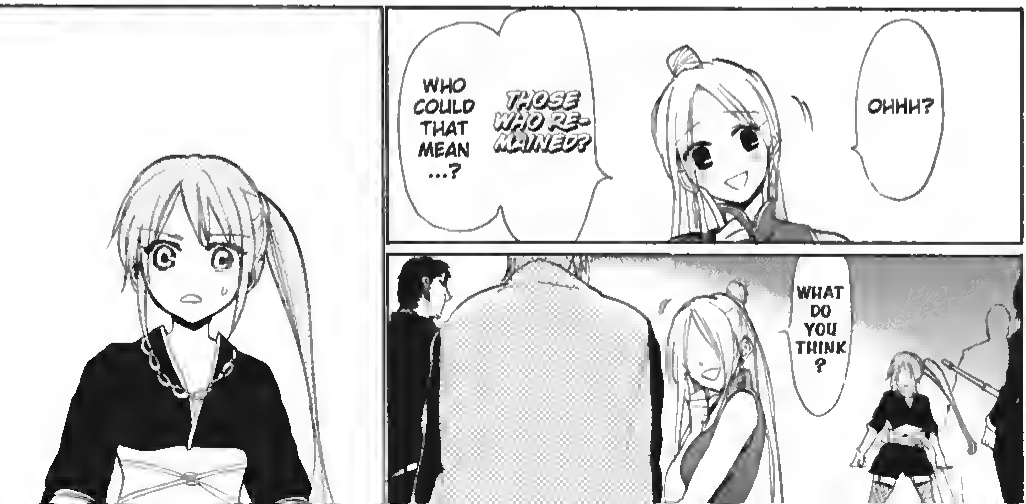
DID YOU REALLY THINK I'D SUBMIT TO SUCH INSANITY?
CAST ASIDE MY FAMILY AND TAKE UP ARMS AGAINST MY FRIENDS?
IROHA!!

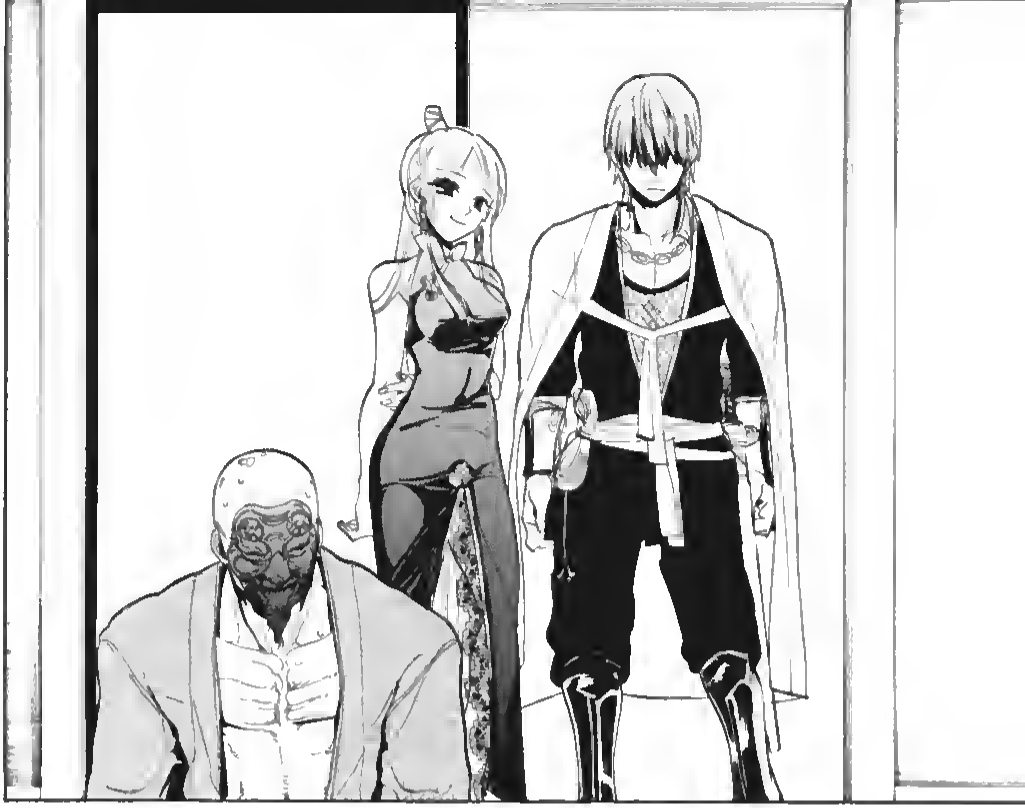

WE'VE NEVER BEEN RICH IN ALLIES OR COMPANIONS.
THERE IS NO USE RESISTING!
THE NUMBERS ARE CLEAR!
NINE OF THE TWELVE CLANS ARE ALREADY COMMITTED TO THE PLAN!

IT'S TO MY BELIEFS AND MY RELATIONSHIPS THAT I MUST BE FAITHFUL NOW!
BUT WE STILL GOT BY. AND IF WE KEEP IT UP, WE'LL CONTINUE TO SURVIVE THIS WAY IN THE FUTURE!

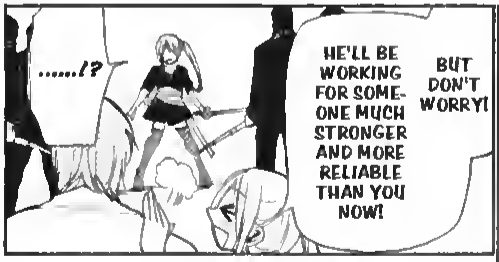
FOR THE SAKE OF THOSE I COULD NOT PROTECT...
I WILL NOT BE SWAYED.
FA-THER...


NIYA (GRIN) NIYA
...I CANNOT ABANDON THE FUTURE OF THE CLAN, UNDER ANY CIR-CUMSTANC-ES!!
...AND THE SAKE OF THOSE WHO RE-MAINED...


WHO COULD THAT MEAN ...?
THOSE WHO RE-MAINED?
OHHH?
WHAT DO YOU THINK?



HAN-
ZOU...?


.....!?
HE'LL BE WORKING FOR SOME-ONE MUCH STRONGER AND MORE RELIABLE THAN YOU NOW!
BUT DON'T WORRY!

I'M AFRAID HE'S GROWN QUITE SICK OF YOU, MY DEAR...
YOU SEE, HANZOU-KUN'S AMONG THOSE IN FAVOR OF THE PLAN.

GET OVER HERE!
I'VE HEARD ENOUGH OF THIS!
HAN-
ZOU!

HANZOU!
...
.....
.....
.....!?
"I CAN'T FOLLOW YOU...
"...ANY LONGER, NEE-SAN..."
!?
DID THAT SOUND LIKE HIM? DID IT?
"YOU NEVER KNEW, NEE-SAN. YOU NEVER KNEW ANY-THING...
"YOU DIDN'T KNOW THAT THE CLAN HEAD WAS STRIKING A DEAL WITH TENTEN-SAN...
"OR...

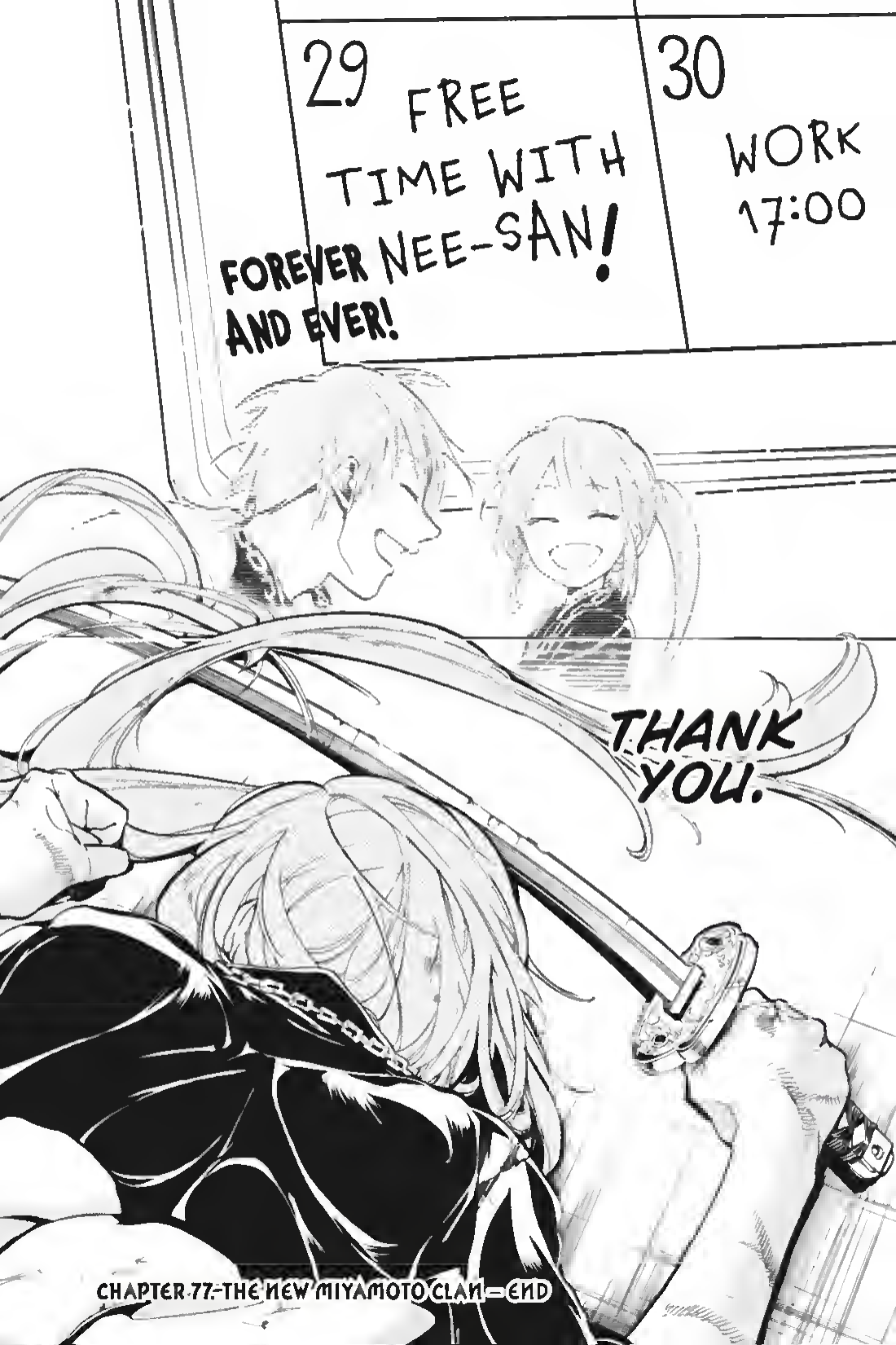
PAYCHECK
IROHA MIYAMOTO
DECEMBER
"...THAT IT WAS ACTUALLY TENTEN-SAN WHO OWNED THE DEED TO THE LAND..."
THANK YOU, SIR!
A QUIET LIFE TOGETHER IS NOW OURS...
...
IROHA!
...WE CAN BORROW THE LAND AND LIVE IN PEACE...
AND NOW...

SO...YOU HAD FUN STRIVING FOR YOUR DREAM...?
I MADE SURE THINGS WERE EASY ENOUGH...
...SO THAT YOU COULD JUST BARELY MAKE IT IF YOU TRIED.
.....
"LITTLE MISS IROHA."
YOU DON'T HAVE THE POWER.
REVIVE YOUR CLAN?
THAT'S WHY THEY ALL LEFT, ISN'T IT!?

JUST... GIVE UP.
HAN... ZOU...?
.....
.....
.....
STOP LISTENING TO THAT BITCH!! STOP BEING HER SLAVE!!
YES IT WILL!! WHAT MAKES YOU SO SURE!?
YOU CAN'T ACTUALLY... BRING IT ALL BACK...
IT'S NOT GOING TO WORK... NEE-SAN...

THEN COULD YOU BEAT TENTEN-SAN?
NEE-SAN, NEE-SAN!
AND THAT MEANS...
...THAT I DARE NOT BETRAY HIS HOPES AND DREAMS.
"YOU'RE SUCH AN IDIOT."
"...TEN YEARS... EVEN TWENTY YEARS FROM NOW!"
"I WON'T EVER LEAVE YOU. I'LL STILL BE AT YOUR SIDE..."

"HANZOU? OKAY THEN, HANZOU."
"H- HANZOU."
"SO WHAT'S YOUR NAME?"
YOUR PRESENCE AT MY SIDE THROUGH THICK AND THIN...
...WAS A CONSTANT REASSUR- ANCE.
YOU HAVE MY GREATEST APPRECIA- TION.



CHAPTER 77-THE NEW MIYAMOTO CLAN—END

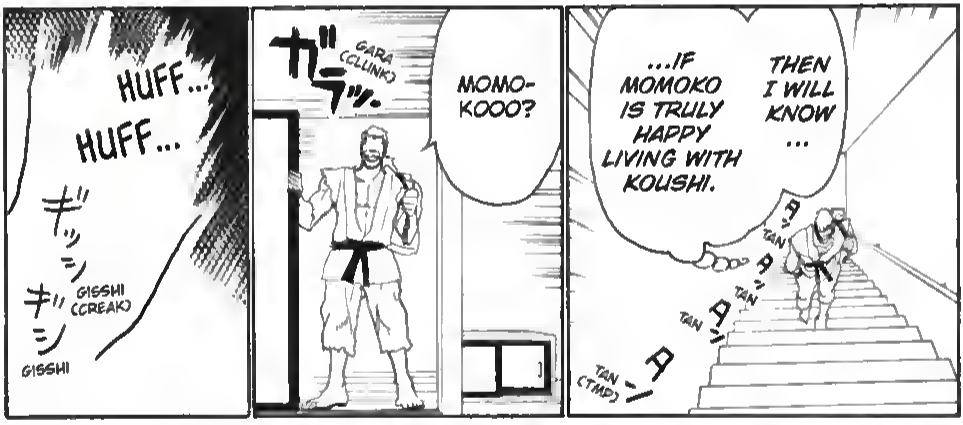
SUMOMOMO,MOMOMO

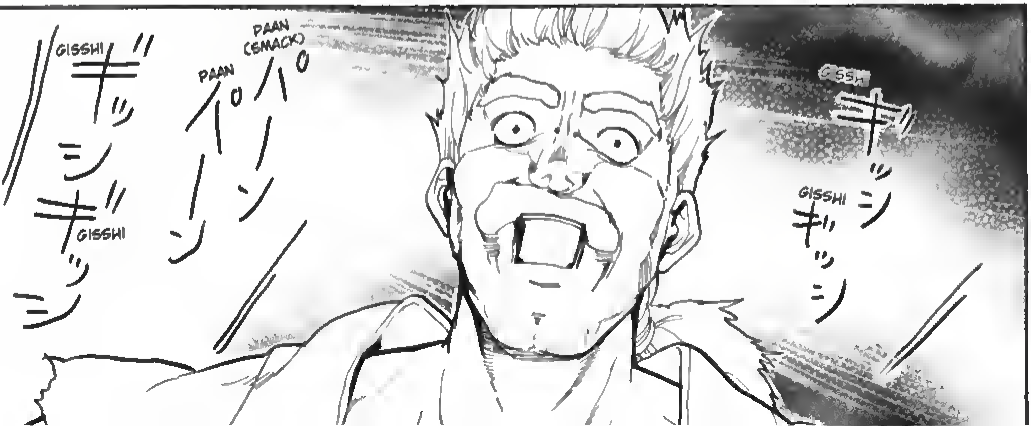
CHICHICHI (CHIRP)
チチチ…
……
……
THERE YOU ARE.
SHIIIN (SILENCE)

78. KOUZAN, KING OF THE JUNGLE

THAT DAY, AT THE INUZUKA HOUSE
WELL... HERE I AM...
I WONDER HOW MOMOKO AND KOUSHI ARE GETTING ALONG?
.....
.....

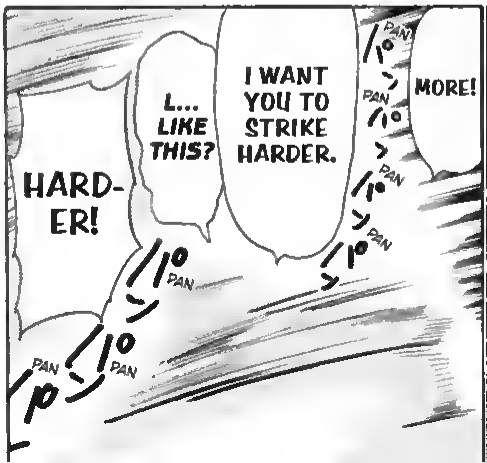
I MUST DETERMINE THE TRUTH WITH MY OWN EYES AND BE DONE WITH IT!
IT'S NO GOOD TRYING TO SETTLE THE ISSUE WITH WORDS.
DON'T MAKE ME REPEAT MYSELF, SENDAYUU... THERE ARE NO SECRETS BETWEEN US.
MOMOKO AND KOUSHI? B-BUT OF COURSE THEY'RE GETTING ALONG FINE...


HUFF... HUFF...
ギッシ
GISSHI (CREAK)
GISSHI
ガラッ
GARA (CLUNK)
MOMO-KOOO?
...IF MOMOKO IS TRULY HAPPY LIVING WITH KOUSHI.
THEN I WILL KNOW ...
TAN
TAN
TAN
TAN (TIMP)


GISSHI
ギッシ
ギッシ
GISSHI
PAAN (SMACK)
パーン
パーン
PAAN
GISSHI
ギッシ
ギッシ

ギュ——ン
GYUUUUN (ZWRRRM)
HUFF!
HUFF!
GISHI (CREAK)
ギシ
ギシ
GISHI

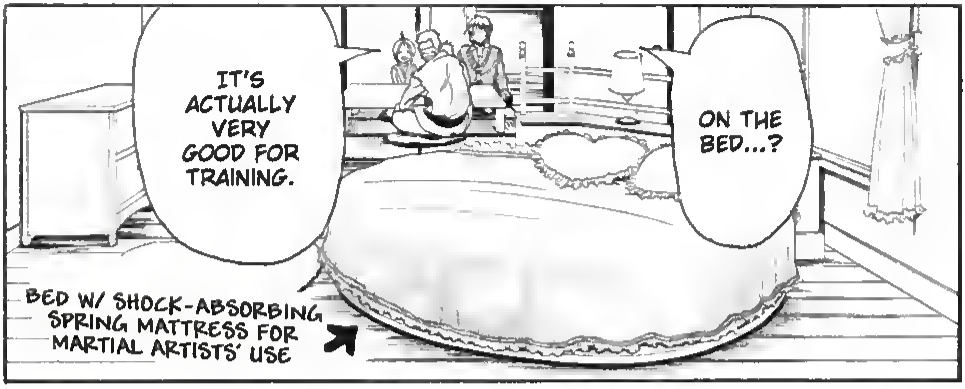
PAN (SMACK)
PAN
ギュルルルル
GYURURURU
I KNOW I HOPED YOU WERE "HAPPY," BUT...IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY?
M... MOMOKO?


HARD-ER!
L... LIKE THIS?
I WANT YOU TO STRIKE HARDER.
MORE!
PAN

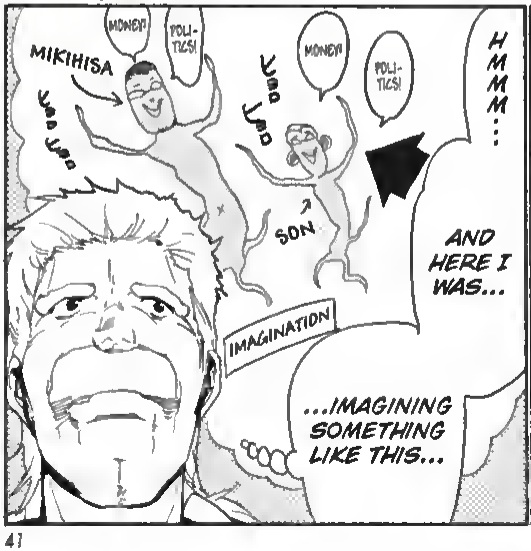
MORE.
PAN
BUT, EVEN STILL...
OF COURSE, WHEN I WAS AT THAT AGE, I WAS BUSY MYSELF...

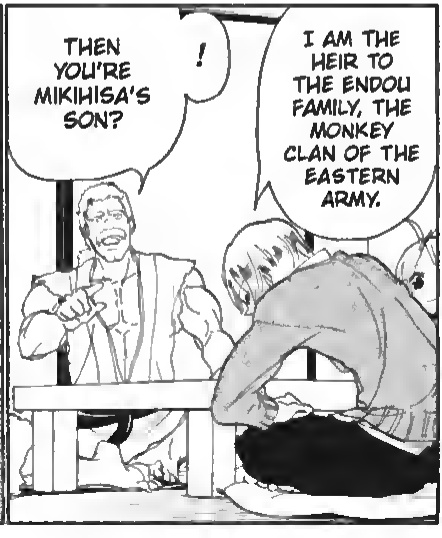
WHAT IS THIS WEAK "SMACK-SMACK" SHIT!? IS THAT WHAT YOU THINK I WANT!!?
PUT SOME FORCE BEHIND IT!!!
HARD-ER!!
THIS IS NOTHING!! I CAN BARELY FEEL IT!! GIVE IT TO ME LIKE YOU'RE TRYING TO RIP MY STOMACH OPEN!!!!
ALL RIGHT, THAT'S ENOUGH!!
PITA (LURCH)
POCHI (POP)
OFF

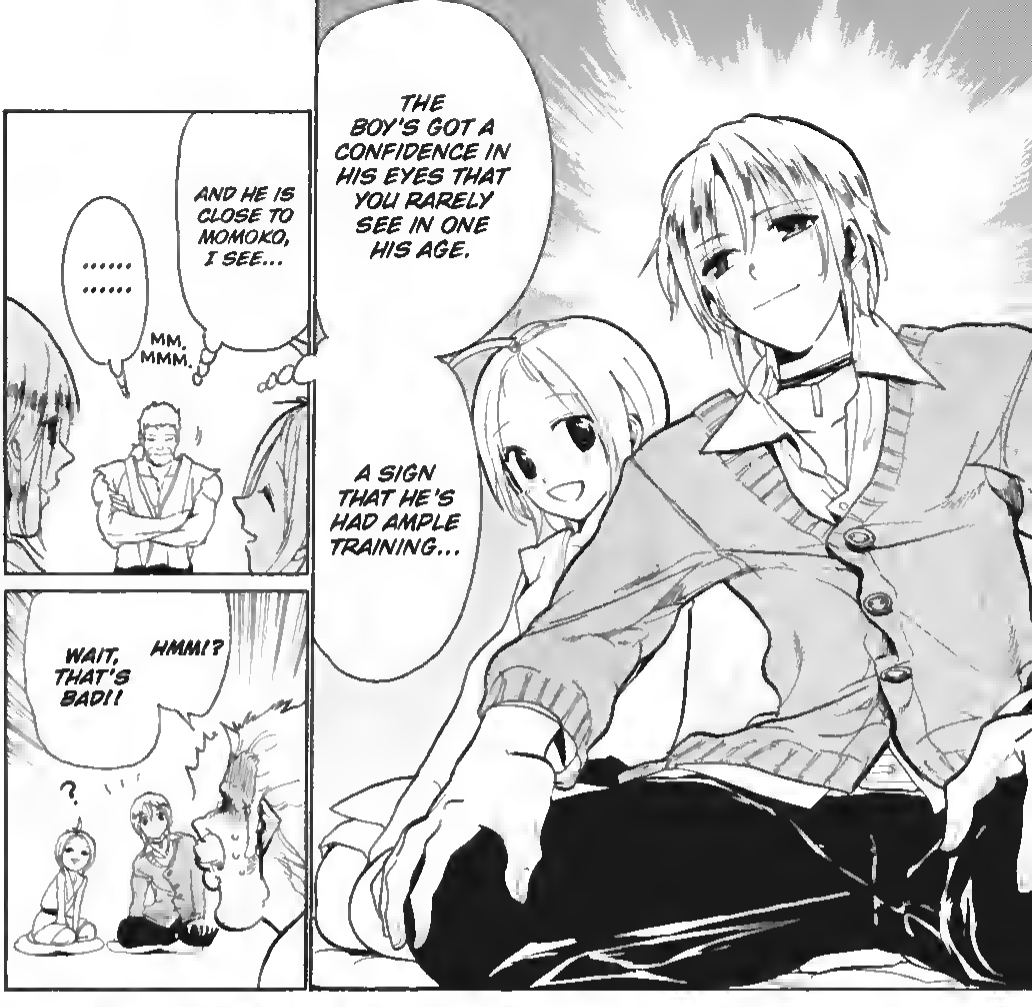
PAAN
PAAN
PAAN
PAAN (SMACK)
.....
.....
FA-THER!?
OH!
OUCH...
GOCHI (CRUNCH)
ゴチッ
PAAN
パアーン
BUILDING MY STOMACH MUSCLES!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?



SFX: HYORO (FRAIL) HYORO HYORO HYORO



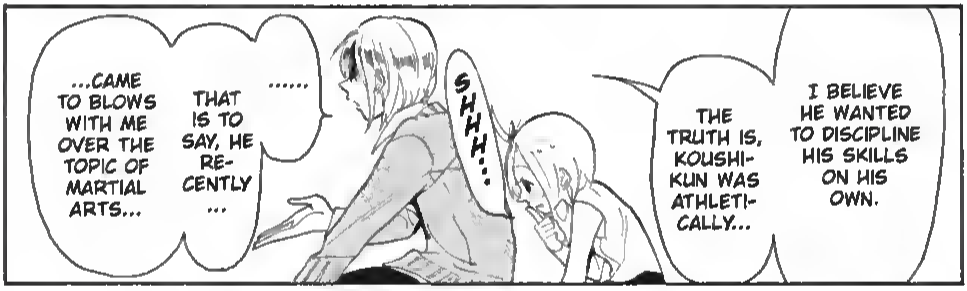



THE BOY'S GOT A CONFIDENCE IN HIS EYES THAT YOU RARELY SEE IN ONE HIS AGE.
A SIGN THAT HE'S HAD AMPLE TRAINING...
AND HE IS CLOSE TO MOMOKO, I SEE...
.....
.....
MM. MMM.
HMM!?
WAIT, THAT'S BAD!!
?

GYAAA!
KOUSHI INUZUKA (SEVEN DAYS AGO)
W-WELL, YOU SEE...
BUT WHERE IS KOUSHI?

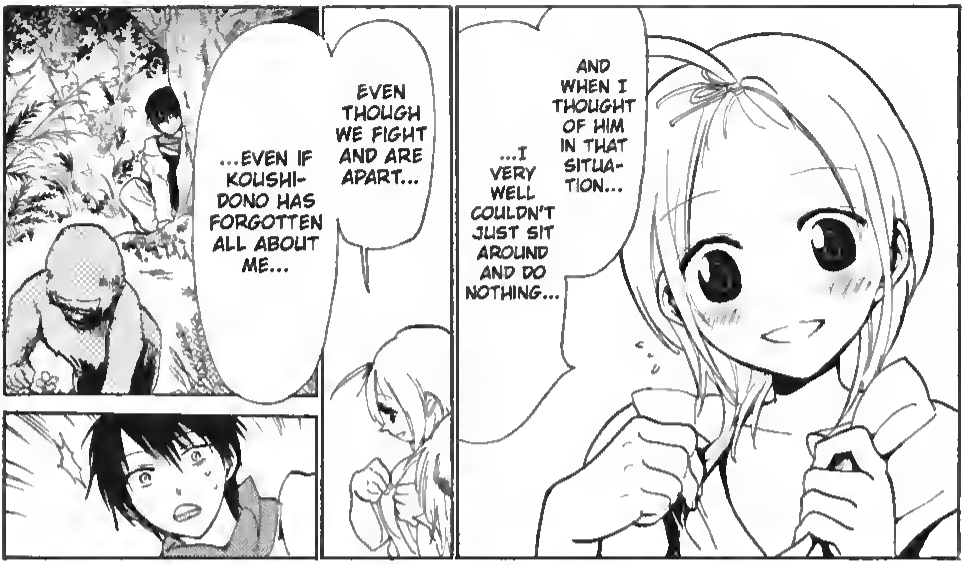
GORO
GORO
GORO (ROLL)

WHAAAAT!?
HE'S ON A TRAINING MISSION?
YES...


I BELIEVE HE WANTED TO DISCIPLINE HIS SKILLS ON HIS OWN.
THE TRUTH IS, KOUSHI-KUN WAS ATHLETI-CALLY...
SHHH...
.....
THAT IS TO SAY, HE RE-CENTLY ...
...CAME TO BLOWS WITH ME OVER THE TOPIC OF MARTIAL ARTS...

HE HAD GROWN TIRED OF OTHER MARTIAL ARTISTS AND WAS SAYING THINGS LIKE, "I WANT TO GET AWAY" AND "I WANT TO FORGET."
!
BUT I CAN UNDER-STAND HIS WISHES...
WHAT!? HE THOUGHT MOMOKO WAS A HINDRANCE!? HE WANTED TO FORGET HER!?
VIL-LAINY!!
I KNEW THAT SHIFTY LAD WAS NO GOOD!

THE BOY IS NO DOUBT LYING DEAD IN SOME FOREST BY NOW.
AND WHAT DOES A CITY BOY KNOW OF A JOURNEY OF TRAINING AND DISCIPLINE!?
I KNOW HE IS USING ALL OF HIS INTELLIGENCE TO SURVIVE AT THIS MOMENT.
KOUSHI-DONO...
...HAS THE INNER STRENGTH TO DRIVE HIMSELF ONWARD...
NO, FATHER. DID I NOT TELL YOU BEFORE?
JIII (STARE)
JIII
MOGU MOGU
JIII
MOGU MUNCHO MOGU


EVEN THOUGH WE FIGHT AND ARE APART...
...EVEN IF KOUSHI-DONO HAS FORGOTTEN ALL ABOUT ME...
AND WHEN I THOUGHT OF HIM IN THAT SITUA-TION...
...I VERY WELL COULDN'T JUST SIT AROUND AND DO NOTHING...

...IT'S STRANGE TO SAY, BUT...

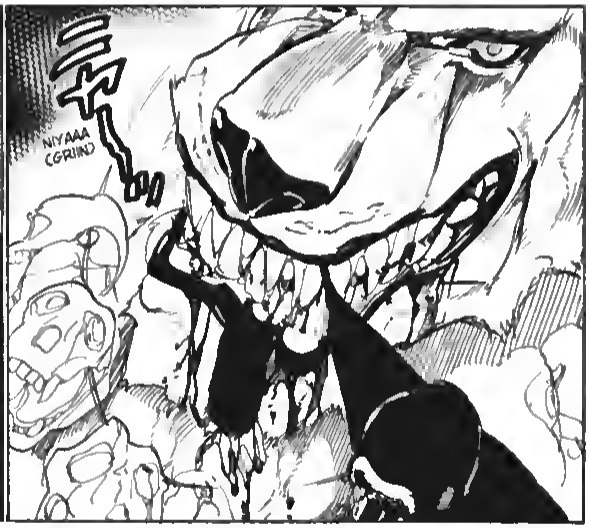
...EVEN THROUGH ALL OF THAT, HE IS STILL MY SOURCE OF ENDLESS STRENGTH.

1
3
3
4
5
6
7

SO THE VALLEY'S EXIT IS THROUGH THAT GIANT TIGER'S LAIR...

GA (CHOMP)
GA
GA

.....


NIYAAA (GRIIND)

DON'T WORRY.

WE'LL JUST HAVE TO HUNT IT.

I'LL BE THE BAIT.

!!!
!!
THAT'S KOUSHI-KUN'S VOICE!
GYAAAA

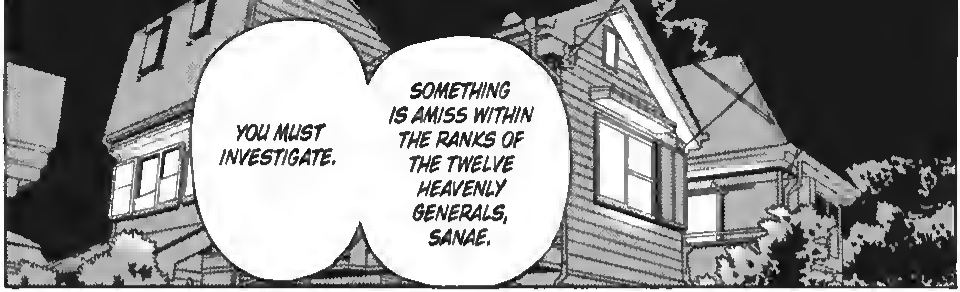
I GUESS IT DIDN'T WORK OUT...
.....
THAT'S ALL HE WAS WORTH, THEN.
!!!
NO, LOOK THERE!!
LOOK!!
GOGOGOGO RUMBLE
ゴゴゴゴゴゴ……

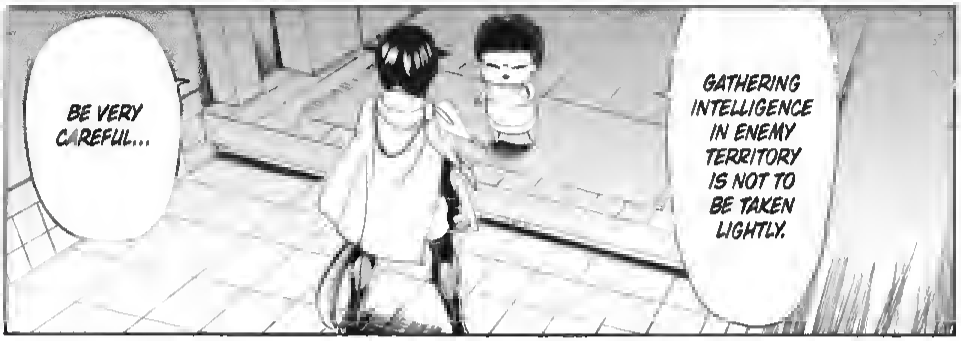
ウオッ!
OOK!
ウオッ!
OOK!
ウオッ!
OOK!
ウオッ!
OOK!
OOK!

KOU-SHI-KUUUN!!
OOK! OOK! ウォッ ウォッ
KOUSHI-KUN!!
OOK! OOK! ウォッ ウォッ
WHAT...WHAT HAPPENED!?
OH... WELL...
ウォッ OOK! ウオン ウオッ OOK! OOK!
GYAAAA!!
THAT WAS MY SCREAM OF POWER...
HE'S GONE FERAL!
THEY INSISTED THAT THEY WANTED TO SEE ME OFF THEM-SELVES...
NO, NOT THAT!
AREN'T YOU HURT!? WHAT WAS THAT SCREAM ABOUT!?
OH, THAT ...
WELL, I'M HAPPY TO REPORT...
...THAT TENGA-SAMA IS READY TO INSTRUCT YOU DIRECTLY NOW...
....
WELL, YOU LOOK MUCH STRON-GER IN BODY AND SPIRIT.
CON-GRATULA-TIONS!
THANKS.

AND THE TENTH DAY AFTER KOUSHI BEGAN TRAINING AT THE KOGANEI VILLAGE MARKED THE VERY LAST DAY THAT HE WAS KNOWN AS "KOUSHI INUZUKA, THE MAN INCAPABLE OF LEARNING MARTIAL ARTS."

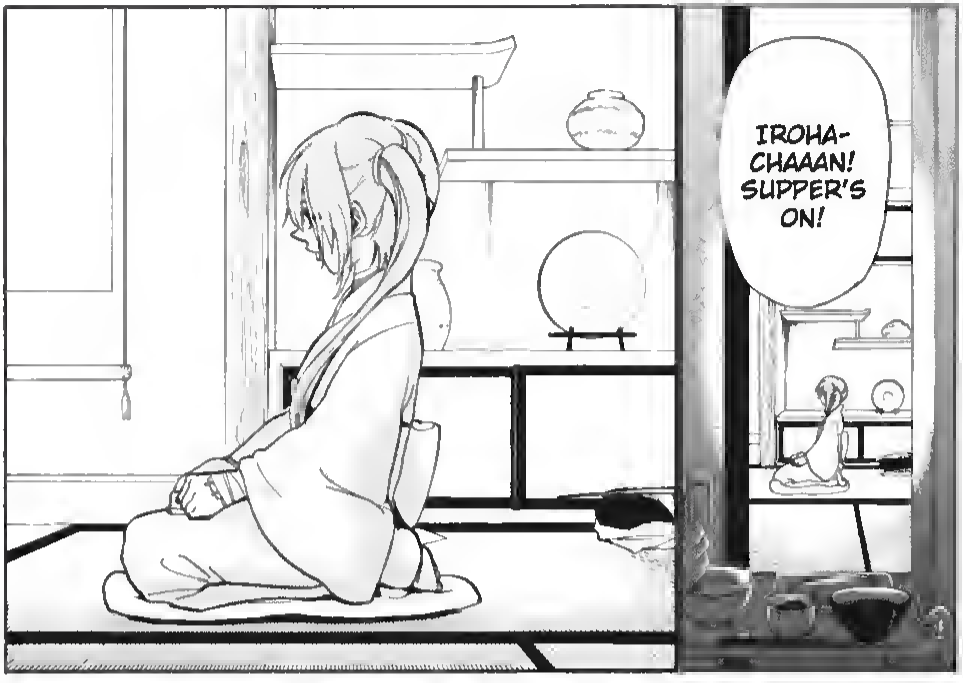
CHAPTER 78. KOUZAN, KING OF THE JUNGLE — END

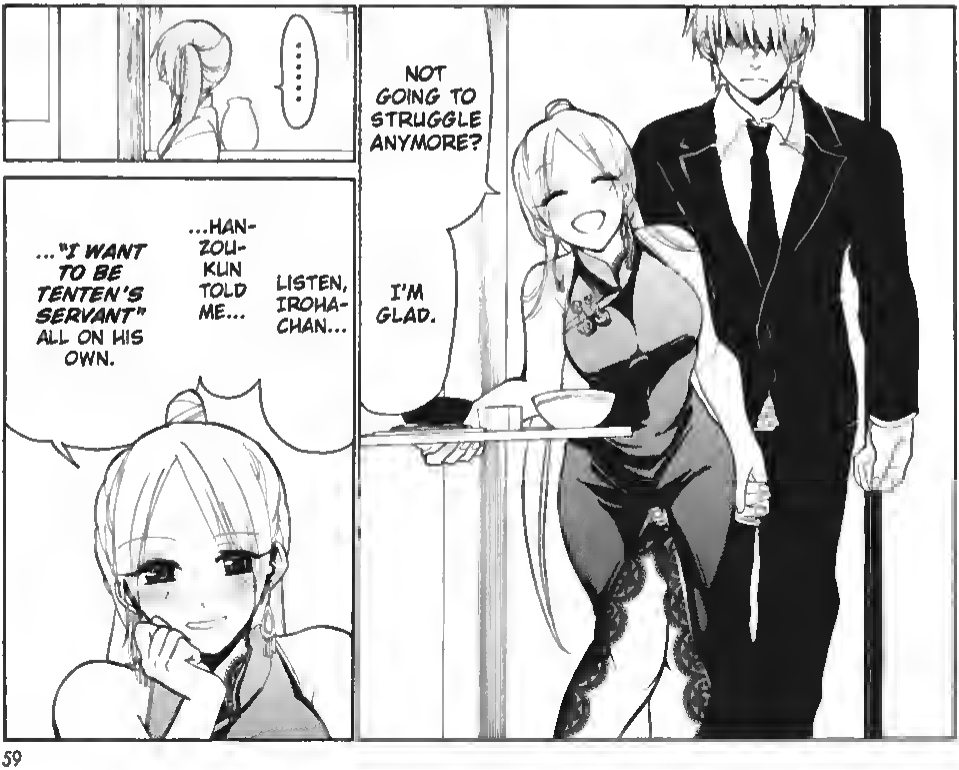

SOMETHING IS AMISS WITHIN THE RANKS OF THE TWELVE HEAVENLY GENERALS, SANAE.
YOU MUST INVESTIGATE.

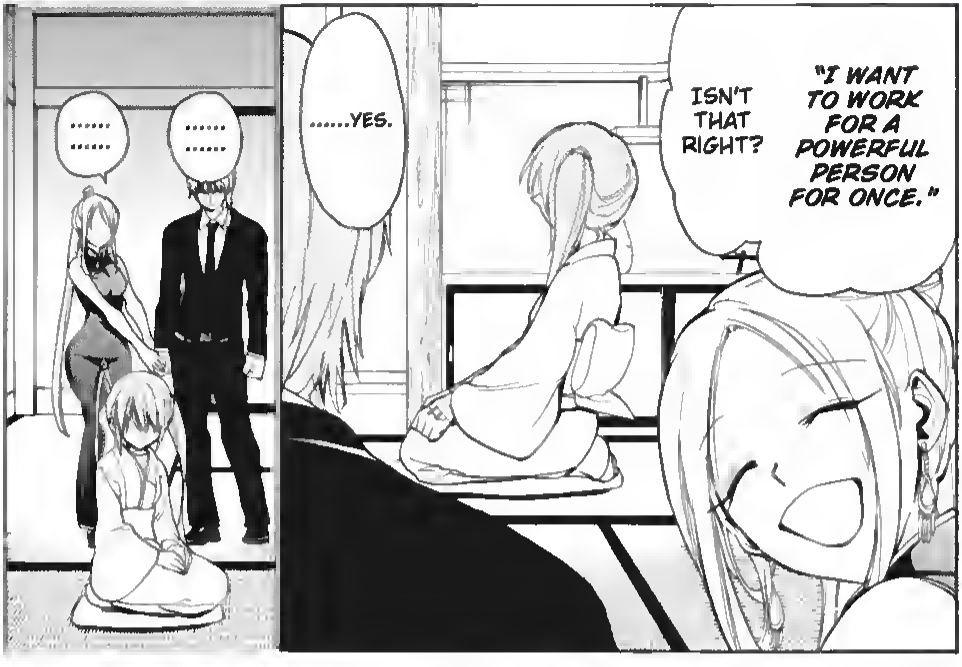

GATHERING INTELLIGENCE IN ENEMY TERRITORY IS NOT TO BE TAKEN LIGHTLY.
BE VERY CAREFUL...

...FIND THE WEAKEST PERSON YOU CAN AND BEAT THE INFO OUT OF HIM!!!
I'M ON THE CASE, GRANDMA!
きゅっと!
KYUTTO CCLENCH!

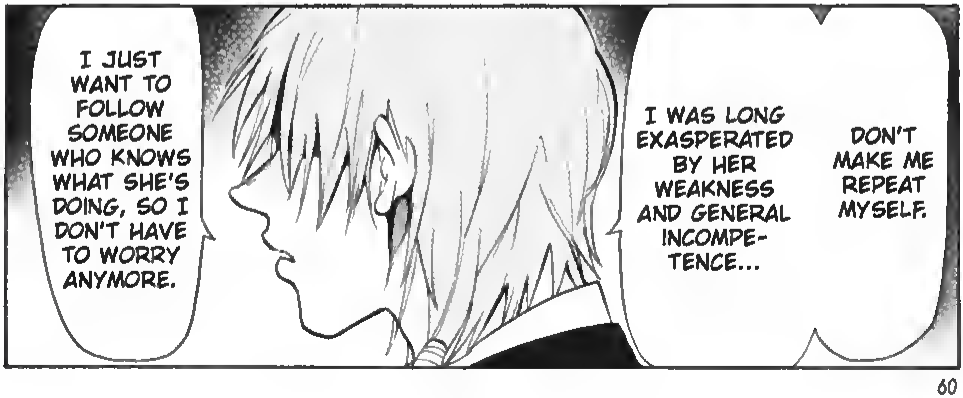
79. YOU ARE VERY RUDE FOR A HANZOU

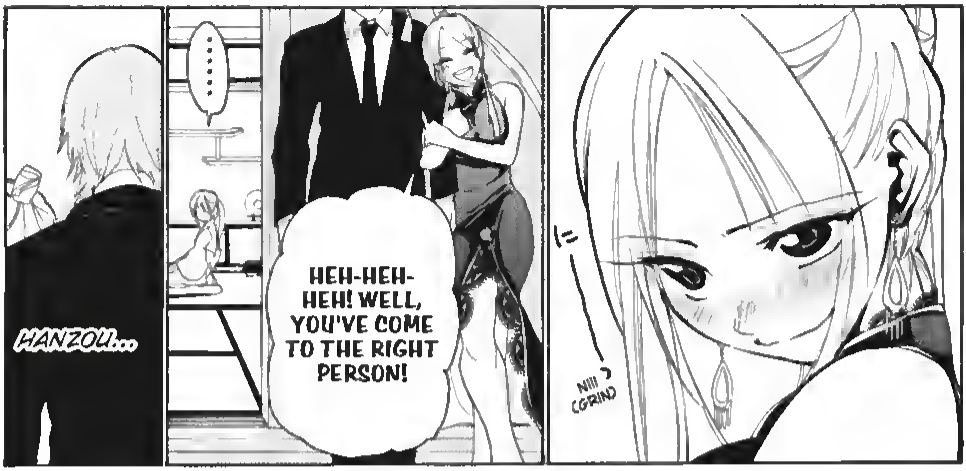

IROHA-CHAAAN! SUPPER'S ON!


.....
NOT GOING TO STRUGGLE ANYMORE?
I'M GLAD.
LISTEN, IROHA-CHAN...
...HAN-ZOU-KUN TOLD ME...
..."I WANT TO BE TENTEN'S SERVANT" ALL ON HIS OWN.


"I WANT TO WORK FOR A POWERFUL PERSON FOR ONCE."
ISN'T THAT RIGHT?
.....YES.
.....
.....
.....
.....

WELL, YOU'RE NO FUN!
PUI (SPIN)
HEY, HANZOU-KUN.
IS IT REALLY TRUE?
IS THAT REALLY HOW YOU FEEL?
.....

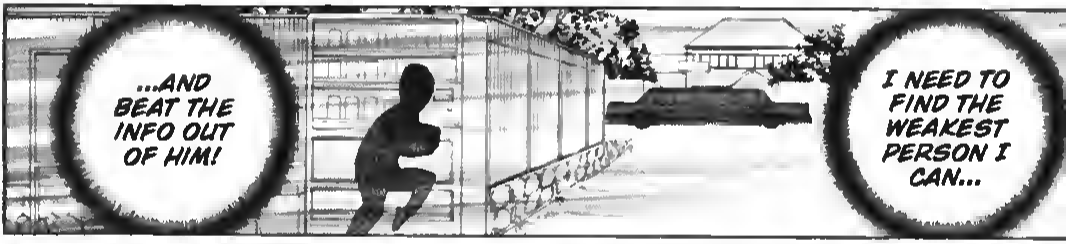

DON'T MAKE ME REPEAT MYSELF.
I WAS LONG EXASPERATED BY HER WEAKNESS AND GENERAL INCOMPE-TENCE...
I JUST WANT TO FOLLOW SOMEONE WHO KNOWS WHAT SHE'S DOING, SO I DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ANYMORE.


HANZOU...
HEH-HEH-HEH! WELL, YOU'VE COME TO THE RIGHT PERSON!
NIII (GRIND)

...WHAT ARE YOU HIDING FROM ME?

THERE MUST BE SOMETHING ABOUT THIS PLOT THAT HE CAN'T TELL ME BUT IS WORTH HIM PLAYING ALONG.
I DON'T EVEN HAVE THE RIGHT TO ACT DEPRESSED UNTIL I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT IT IS HE'S HIDING.

...GOING TO FIND THAT OUT...
ZUKI (THROB)
ズギギ
ZUKI
AND IF I'M...
ZURU (SLIDE)
ずる..


...AND BEAT THE INFO OUT OF HIM!
I NEED TO FIND THE WEAKEST PERSON I CAN...

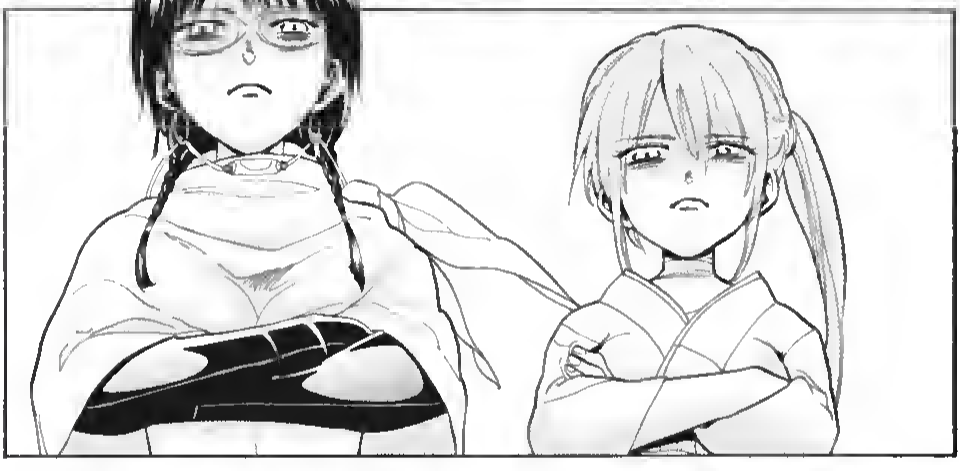
TEA

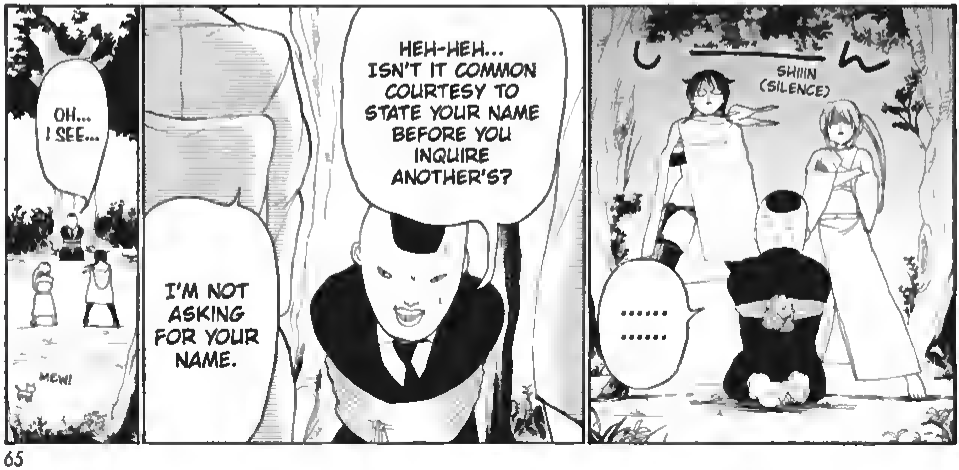
WHAT THE—!?
DA (DASH)
AND THAT'S YOUUU!
FU (FWP)
SA (SWISH)
WHA ...!?
WAIT...
HUH?

HUH?

?

ボボグ
BOBOGU
(BWURNK)




OH... I SEE...
MEW!
I'M NOT ASKING FOR YOUR NAME.
HEH-HEH... ISN'T IT COMMON COURTESY TO STATE YOUR NAME BEFORE YOU INQUIRE ANOTHER'S?
SHIIIN (SILENCE)
.....
.....

I SUPPOSE TENKA AND SHINTAROU-SENPAI ARE IN SIMILAR SITUATIONS...
A "PLAN TO DEFEAT DOG AND DRAGON"? WHAT RUBBISH. TELL ME THE DETAILS OF YOUR PLOT!
GIRI GIRI GIRI GIRI (STRETCH)
AAAAA
HA-PHI!
NO.
HUH!!?
ZAWA (MURMUR)
SO THE MONKEY CLAN IS ON THE ENEMY'S SIDE, THEN...
VERY ADMIRABLE. AND WHAT IS YOUR NAME?
HEH-HEH! WITNESS THE STRENGTH OF THIS MARTIAL ARTIST'S SOUL!
STUB-BORN, AREN'T YOU?
TSU-YOSHI EN-DOU!
SFX: GESHI (STOMP)
YEOW!!
DON'T EVEN TRY IT!
WAIT, I MEAN, NAKA-JIMA!

THAT'S RIGHT... THE GREAT MEN OF OUR CLAN HAVE DISCOV-ERED...
ANCIENT POWERS!
...THE SUPER-HUMAN POWER OF OUR DISTANT ANCES-TORS.
DAMMIT! YOU MEDDLING GIRLS WILL RUE THIS INSULT!
ONCE I GET THE ANCIENT POWER, YOU'LL GET YOURS!
AAAA

YOU'LL NEED TO TELL YOUR FATHER AND HANZOU-KUN AS WELL...
IS THIS "ANCIENT POWER"... WHAT CAUSED FATHER AND HANZOU TO ABANDON THE FAMILY...?
THIS IS BAD...THE OTHERS NEED TO KNOW.
I HEARD THEM WHISPERING TO ONE ANOTHER TWO NIGHTS AGO...
A PAIR OF TOTAL COWARDS, THEY ARE.
HEH-HEH! THOSE TWO? FAT CHANCE!
GA (GRAB)
ALL ABOUT "HOW TO LIVE IN PEACE WITHOUT TAKING PART IN THE WAR" OR SOMETHING...

WHAT DID THEY SAY!?
ARE YOU INSANE?

REALLY, SIR...?
I AM QUITE SANE.
WE WILL TAKE NO PART IN THE COMING WAR.
WE WILL LIVE APART, IN PEACE.
FOR THAT TO HAPPEN ...
...WE MUST AGREE TO THE PLAN TO DEFEAT DRAGON AND DOG.
WE MUST ABANDON THE ATTEMPT TO RECONSTRUCT OUR CLAN.
IROHA WILL NOT ACCEPT THESE TERMS, I HAVE NO DOUBT...
.....
.....
WHICH IS WHY..
...I WANT TO WEAR DOWN HER WILL TO FIGHT TOMORROW...
YOU WILL HELP ME, I TRUST?
.....
.....
I CANNOT..
HANZOU-KUN?

I CANNOT DO THAT.
I CANNOT BREAK NEE-SAN'S WILL TO FIGHT. EVEN AT YOUR REQUEST.
AND I AM WITH HER! I WILL BE AT HER SIDE. NO MATTER WHAT TERRIBLE FOES MAY AWAIT US!
.....
.....
THERE WAS A TIME...
...WHEN I CLUNG TO THOSE SAME PLATITUDES, MY BOY...
HUH...?
IROHA'S MOTHER...
...WAS A STRONG-WILLED WOMAN.
SHE WAS COURAGEOUS AND FEROCIOUS AND WAS SKILLED WITH THE BLADE— A LADY WARRIOR UNPARALLELED IN MIYAMOTO HISTORY.

I WAS DRUNK ON HER. I WORSHIPPED HER.
AND AS THE MAN CLOSEST TO HER...
...I FELT AS THOUGH I WAS HER PROTECTOR OF SORTS.
AND THEN...
...SHE DIED...
...FIFTEEN YEARS AGO, BEFORE INUZUKA AND KUZURYUU JOINED FORCES...
...AND SQUABBLES BETWEEN EAST AND WEST WERE COMMON...
I WAS UNABLE TO PROTECT HER.
PROTECT HER? I COULD HAVE DONE NO SUCH THING.
I WAS HER SUBORDINATE. I WAS WEAKER THAN SHE WAS...
THERE WAS NO WAY I COULD HAVE SAVED HER FROM FOES THAT OVERPOWERED HER.
DON'T YOU SEE?
.....
.....

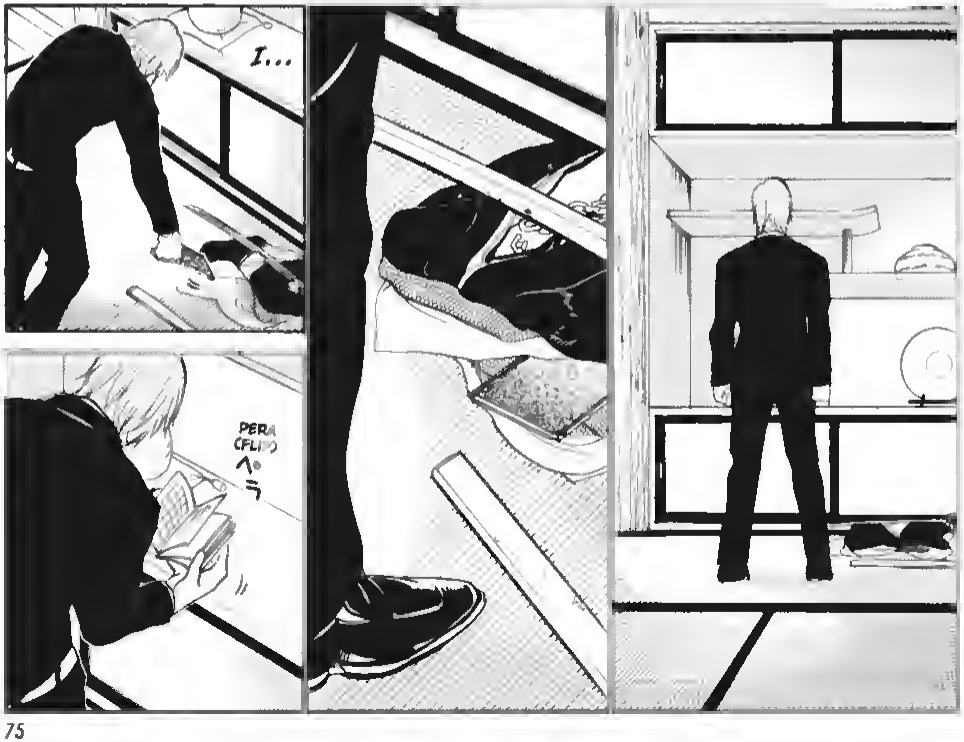
BUT—!
...WILL DO NOTHING.
DESIRES AND FEELINGS ...
.....
.....
...WILL DO NOTHING
PLAYING NICE...
SO CAN YOU BEAT TENTEN KOGANEI!?
!!!

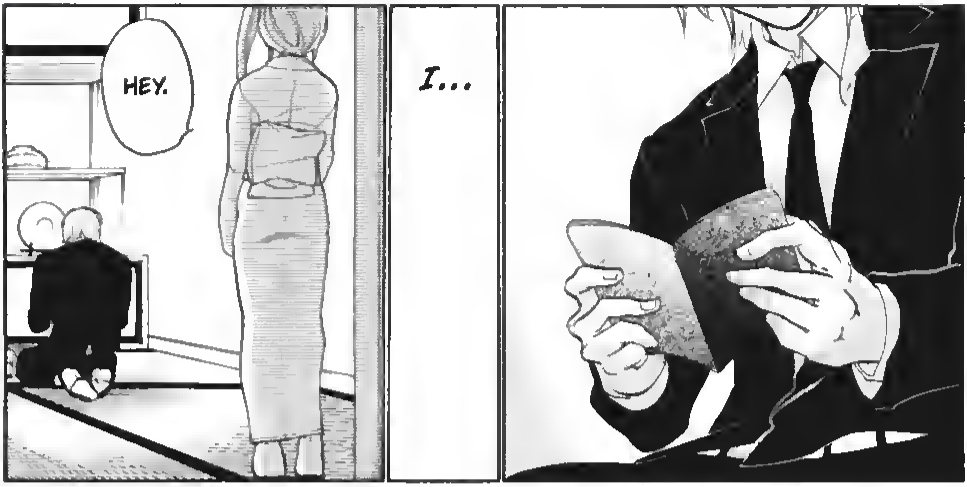
HAVE YOU!?
GIVEN EVERY OUNCE!?
OF YOUR BODY AND SOUL!?
AND FOUGHT TO THE END OF YOUR VERY LIFE!?
AND SUCCESS-FULLY PROTECTED IROHA FROM THOSE WHO ARE STRONGER THAN HER!?
DO YOU HAVE THE CONFIDENCE TO PROTECT HER?
DO YOU HAVE THE STRENGTH TO PROTECT HER!?
YOU DO NOT!!!

"I"... WHAT?

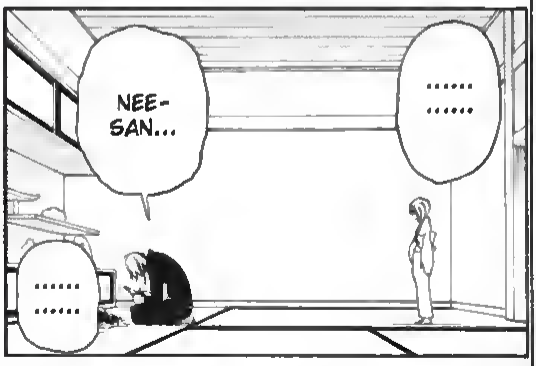
IF YOUR SELFISH MOTIVES WILL ONLY DRIVE MY DAUGHTER TO HER DEATH...

...THEN I DO NOT WANT YOU AROUND HER...




HEY.
I...

I HEARD THE STORY.


NEE-SAN...
.....
.....
.....

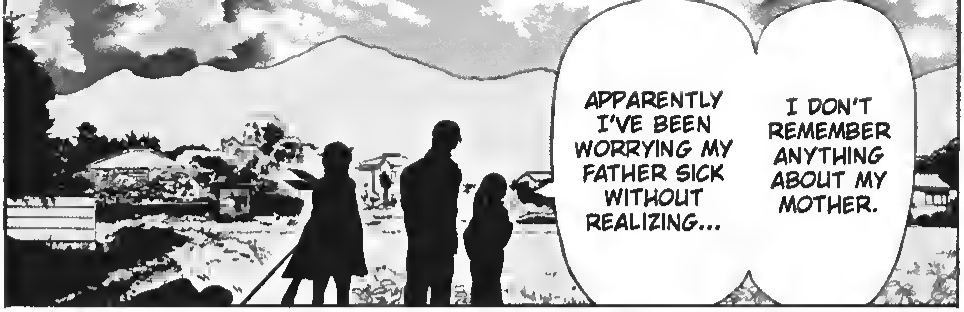
...SO WEAK...
I AM...

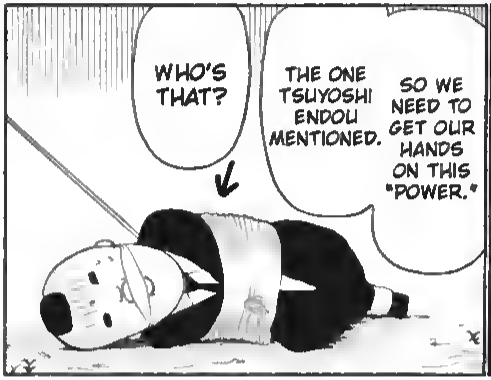
EVEN WITH A SWORD IN MY HAND...
...EVEN RISKING MY LIFE FOR YOU...
...I COULD NEVER BE YOUR SHIELD...
.....
.....
SHIELD?
I DON'T WANT YOU TO BE THAT.
JUST BY BEING AT MY SIDE...
.....
.....
...YOU MAKE ME STRON-GER.
IF YOU WOULD GRANT ME JUST ONE MORE CHANCE ...

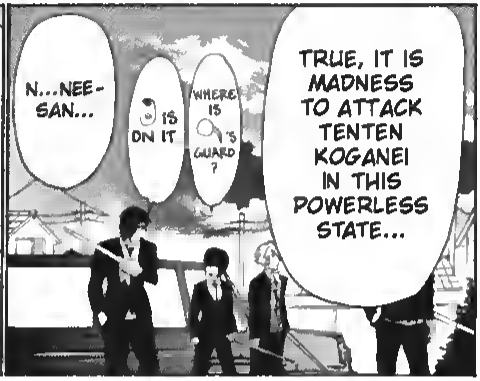
.....
.....
...THEN BE MY SOURCE OF STRENGTH.

I BEG YOU!

BWAAAAH!
WAIT! NO!
STOP, HAN-ZOU!
AAAAAAH!
AAAAH!
THE GUARDS WILL FIND ME...

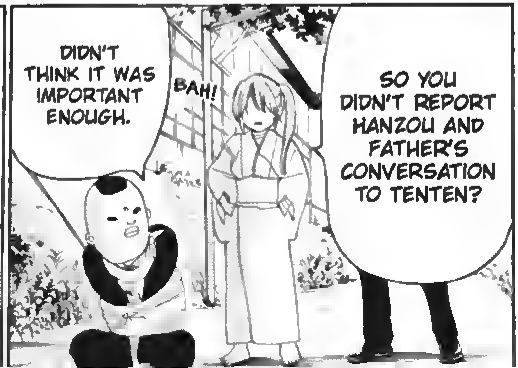

I DON'T REMEMBER ANYTHING ABOUT MY MOTHER.
APPARENTLY I'VE BEEN WORRYING MY FATHER SICK WITHOUT REALIZING...


WHO'S THAT?
THE ONE TSUYOSHI ENDOU MENTIONED.
SO WE NEED TO GET OUR HANDS ON THIS "POWER."


N...NEE-SAN...
IS DN IT
WHERE IS 'S GUARD ?
TRUE, IT IS MADNESS TO ATTACK TENTEN KOGANEI IN THIS POWERLESS STATE...

OOOOH!!
I'M THINKING WE SHOULD GET OUR HANDS ON THAT AND BOOST OUR OWN ABILITIES.
ANCIENT POWER
APPARENTLY THE ENEMY HAS A SPECIAL "ANCIENT POWER" THING UP THEIR SLEEVE THAT WILL HELP THEM COMPETE WITH US.

HUH?
AAAAAH!
... HORSE MASK.
NOW GET HIM OUT OF OUR HAIR...
WELL, IT'S A GOOD THING TSU-YOSHI'S AN IDIOT.


DIDN'T THINK IT WAS IMPORTANT ENOUGH.
BAH!
SO YOU DIDN'T REPORT HANZOU AND FATHER'S CONVERSATION TO TENTEN?

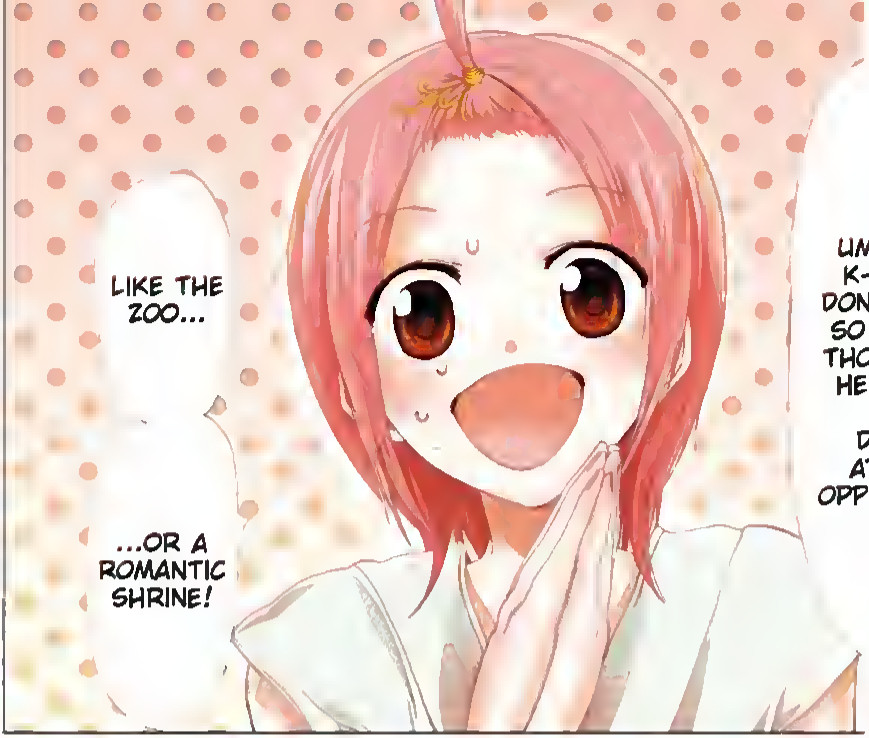
AND I'LL TELL THE OTHERS ABOUT THE PLOT.
WE'RE GOING TO SNEAK INTO THE ENEMY'S CAMP AND SEEK OUT THIS "ANCIENT POWER."
LET'S TAKE CARE OF THIS.
ABSO-LUTELY.
MOMOKO-CHAN AND INUZUKA-KUN...
GASHI (GRAB)
...WON'T BE DYING ON MY WATCH!

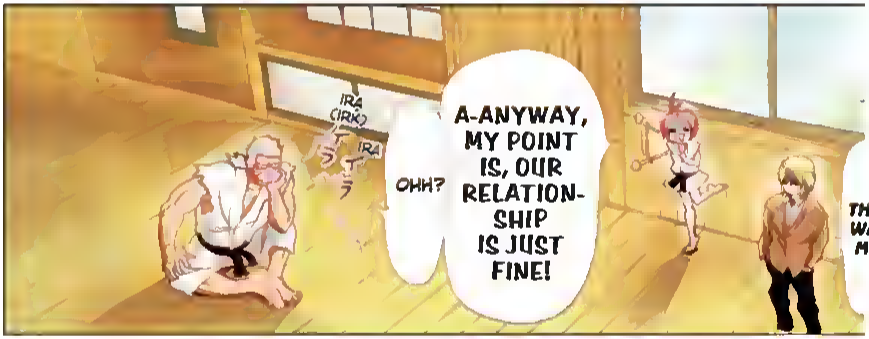
CHAPTER 79. YOU ARE VERY RUDE FOR A HANZOU – END

すもも先もも
80. BREAKDOWN
地上最強のヨメ

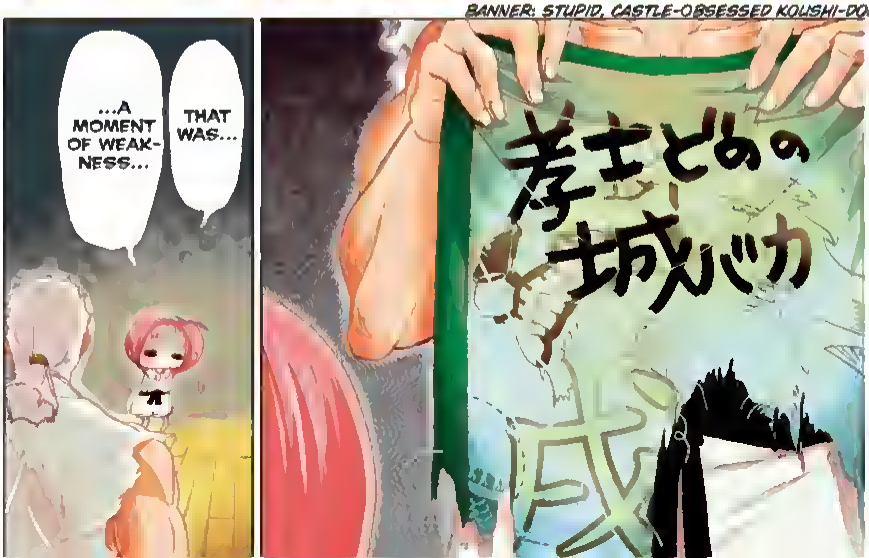
MIKIHISA.
WHAT DID YOU DO TO MATOBA?
...BECAUSE THEY ARE CONCERNED OVER THE FUTURE OF THE MARRIAGE THAT HOLDS OUR ALLIANCE TOGETHER?
PERHAPS THEY ARE AVOIDING YOU...
WHA... WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
TELL ME WHY SONEDA AND MINOWA REFUSE TO GIVE ME STRAIGHT ANSWERS.
HOW DARE YOU!?
GASHI (GRAB)
...THAT KOUSHI-KUN IS A MARTIAL ARTIST WITHOUT COMMAND OF THE ARTS...
I MUST TELL SENDA-YUU-SAN...
I WILL HAVE TO BEGIN DISCUS-SIONS.
...I CANNOT VERY WELL LOOK THE OTHER WAY.
IF KOUSHI-KUN IS CAUSING DISCORD AMONG THE TWELVE CLANS...

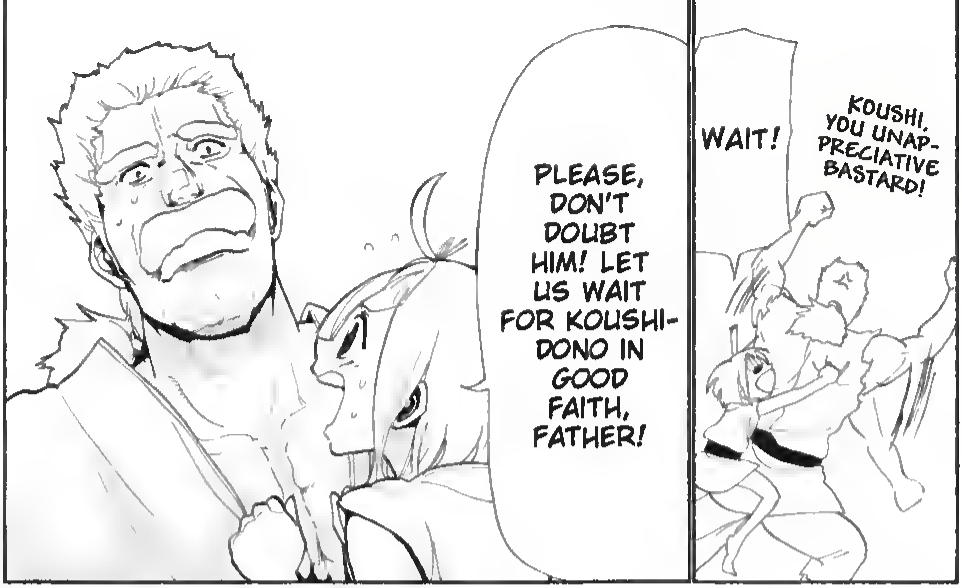
I CANNOT IGNORE THE CRACKS IN OUR CURRENT STATE OF PEACE...
...WHEN I MUST CONSID-ER THE FUTURE OF MY CLAN AND SON!
"THE FUTURE OF MY CLAN AND SON"...?
YES, INDEED...
WHAT IS GOING ON WITH KOUSHI?
HOW MANY DAYS WILL HE ABANDON MY SWEET LITTLE MOMOKO...?


LIKE THE ZOO...
...OR A ROMANTIC SHRINE!
UMMM, BUT K-KOUSHI-DONO IS EVER SO KIND AND THOUGHTFUL. HE T-TAKES ME ON D-DATES AT EVERY OPPORTUNITY!



BANNER: STUPID, CASTLE-OBSESSED KOUSHI-DONO

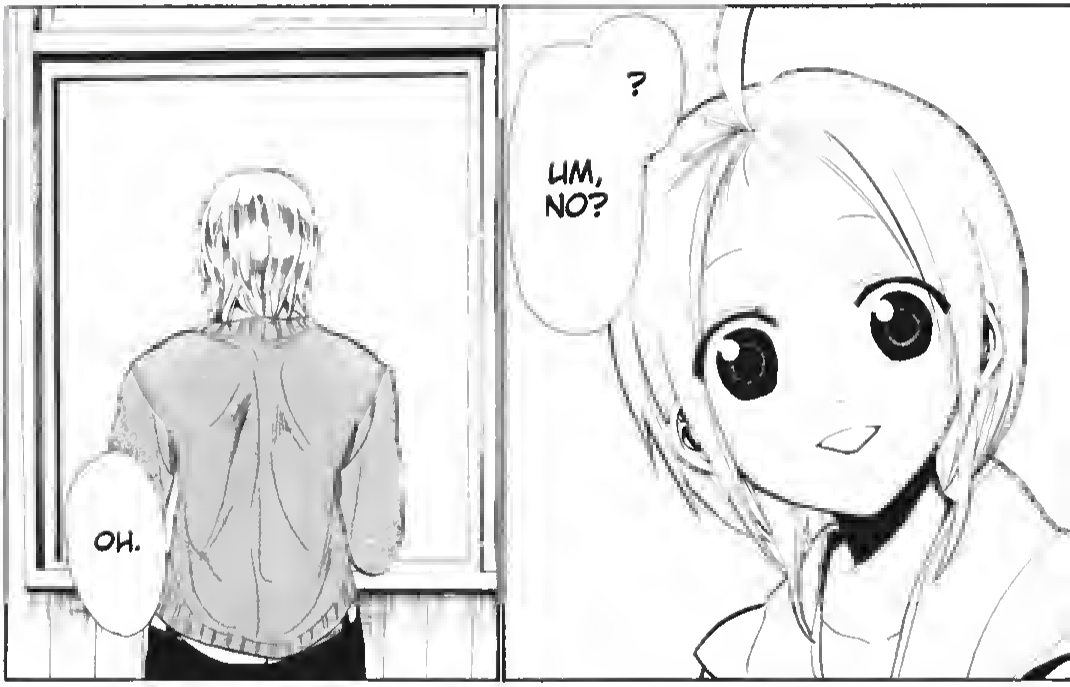



PLEASE, DON'T DOUBT HIM! LET US WAIT FOR KOUSHI-DONO IN GOOD FAITH, FATHER!
WAIT!
KOUSHI, YOU UNAP-PRECIATIVE BASTARD!

VERY WELL!
PON (PAT)
ポン
PON
ポン
.....

.....
WHEW...

...HATE ME?
...DO YOU...
MOMOKO-CHAN...

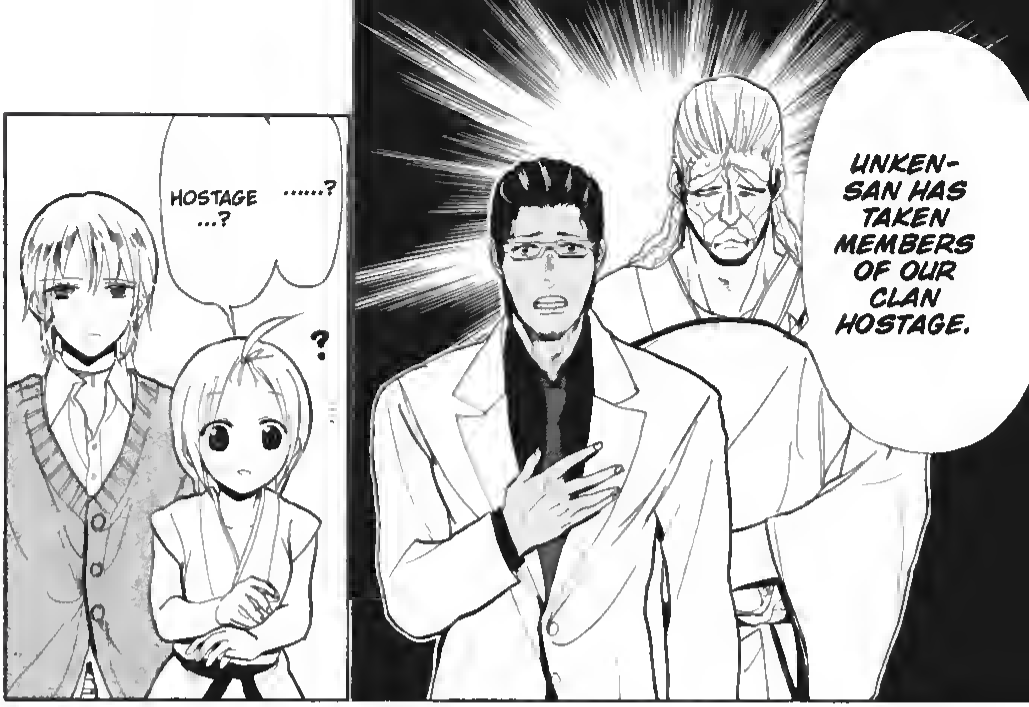

OH.
?
UM, NO?

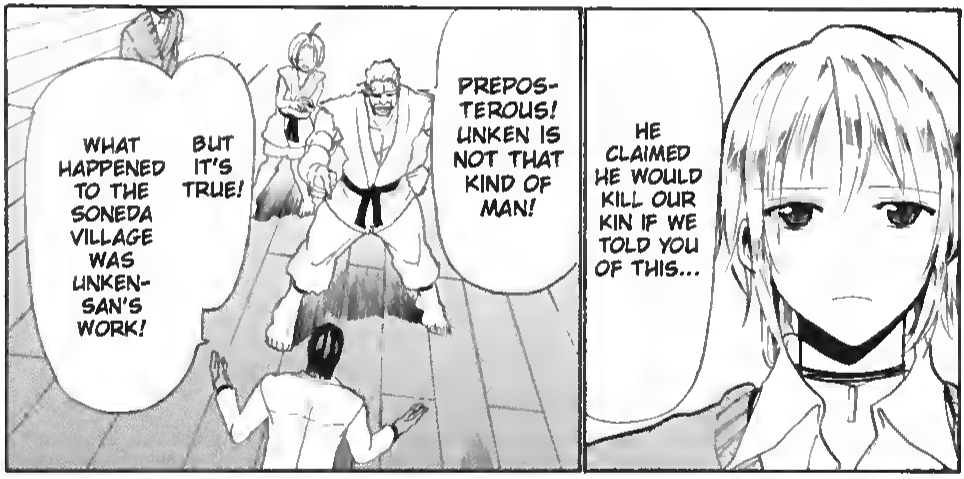
OHH?
WHOSE GIANT LIMOS ARE THOSE?
? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

...AND...
...SONEDA?
MIKI-HISA...
...I HAVE COME TO BRING MOST SERIOUS TIDINGS TO YOU, SIR.
SENDA-YUU-SAN...
OH, NO.
YUUSUKE! YOUR FATHER IS HERE.
...HE IS HIDING SOME-THING FROM YOU.
I AM AFRAID...
I MUST DO IT BEFORE UNKEN-SAN CATCHES UP...

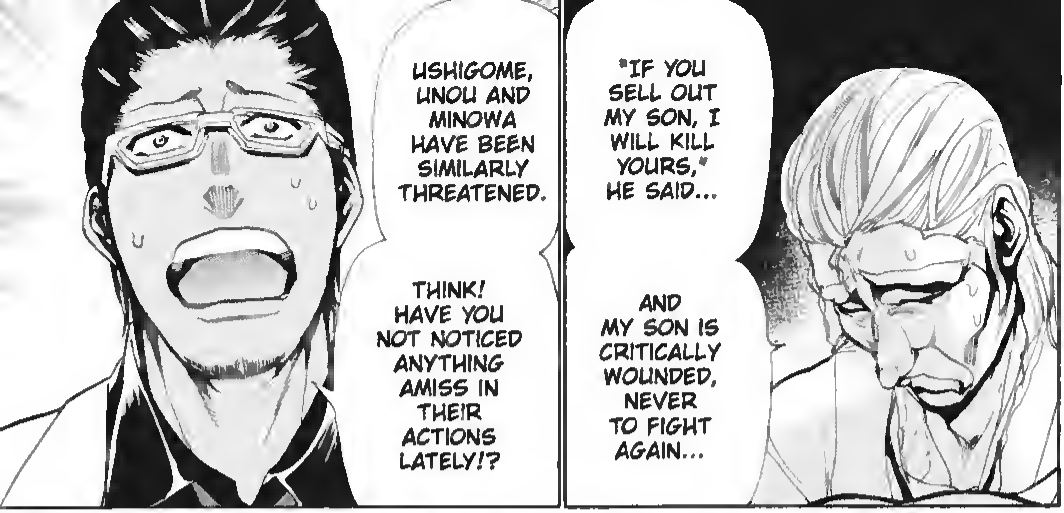
KOUSHI-KUN IS ENTIRELY INCAPABLE OF USING MARTIAL ARTS.

HA-HA-HA! WHATEVER DO YOU MEAN?
THAT IS NONSENSE, MIKIHISA.
IT'S TRUE.
HAVE YOU NOT SEEN INDICATIONS OF THIS FACT IN UNKEN-SAN'S BEHAVIOR?
.....
.....
AND WHAT OF IT?
WHY HAVE YOU COME AT THIS LATE HOUR?
I COULD NOT HAVE TOLD YOU BEFORE.
I KNOW THAT KOUSHI-DONO WILL RETURN FROM HIS TRAVELS WITH NEW SKILLS AT HIS COMMAND.
THAT WILL SETTLE THIS PROBLEM!
DOKI (BADUMP)
ドキ
ドキ
DOKI
WHAT CAN I DO...?


HOSTAGE ...?
.....?
?
UNKEN-SAN HAS TAKEN MEMBERS OF OUR CLAN HOSTAGE.


WHAT HAPPENED TO THE SONEDA VILLAGE WAS UNKEN-SAN'S WORK!
BUT IT'S TRUE!
PREPOS-TEROUS! UNKEN IS NOT THAT KIND OF MAN!
HE CLAIMED HE WOULD KILL OUR KIN IF WE TOLD YOU OF THIS...

.....
.....
...TO KEEP THE SONEDA QUIET ABOUT THIS DREADFUL SECRET.
I'M AFRAID THAT UNKEN-SAN LED THE ASSAULT ON THE VILLAGE...
WE'VE GOTTEN WORD THAT YOU ARRANGED A LITTLE SOME-THING AT THE VILLAGE OF SONEDA!
ニヤ

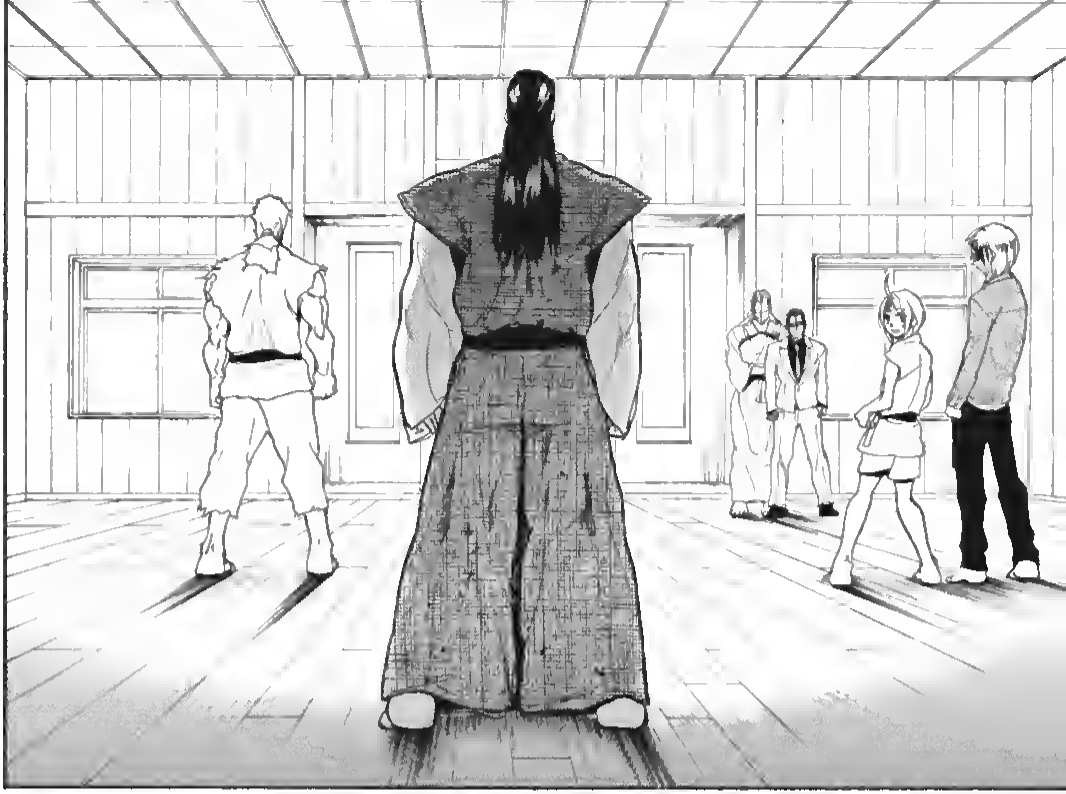

USHIGOME, UNOU AND MINOWA HAVE BEEN SIMILARLY THREATENED.
THINK! HAVE YOU NOT NOTICED ANYTHING AMISS IN THEIR ACTIONS LATELY!?
"IF YOU SELL OUT MY SON, I WILL KILL YOURS," HE SAID...
AND MY SON IS CRITICALLY WOUNDED, NEVER TO FIGHT AGAIN...

UNKEN-SAN THINKS OF NOTHING BUT SEEING HIS SON PLACED AT THE HEAD OF THE TWELVE HEAVENLY GENERALS!
I BESEECH YOU, FOR YOUR DAUGHTER'S SAKE IF NOTHING ELSE— RECONSIDER HER MARRIAGE PARTNER!!
.....!?

UNKEN-SAN... TOLD ME...
.....
.....

"ONCE MY SON GETS AN HEIR OUT OF THAT KUZURYUU GIRL, THE WORLD WILL FINALLY BE MINE"...

!
SO SENDAYUU HAS COME...
FOR THE SAKE OF MY SON'S FUTURE...
...AND FOR THE SAKE OF THE FUTURE OF ALL MARTIAL ARTISTS...
...I MUST RESIGN MYSELF TO THIS OUT-COME...



SENDA-
YUU...

MIKIHISA IS LYING... ISN'T HE?
.....
.....
.....

... BELIEVE IT.
I WILL NOT...

I WILL TELL HIM OF KOUSHI-KUN'S INCOMPETENCE.
.....
.....
.....
.....
...IT'S TRUE...

BAN
(BOOOM)
YOU SCUM !!!
UN-KEN !!

GO
(CRUNCH)!

BAGAA
(KAPOW)

DOON (BOOM)
DODODODODON (RUMBLE)
SENDA-YUU...
I WAS WRONG TO KEEP THIS FROM YOU.
MY SON CANNOT USE MARTIAL ARTS!
PERHAPS THE FAULT LIES IN HOW I RAISED THE BOY.
I HAVE TURNED HIM INTO A WEAK MAN...
...THE KIND WHO FLEES FROM HIS CALLING.
BUT...
...
MOMOKO
...

THAT COWARDLY, SULKING BOY HAS CHANGED IN THE SPAN OF A FEW MONTHS...
MOMOKO HAS CHANGED HIM FOR THE BETTER.
HE HAS BEGUN TO BATTLE HIS WEAKNESS.
HE HAS BEGUN TO STRUGGLE TOWARD STRENGTH.
I PLACE ALL OF MY HOPES UPON HIS DEVELOPMENT ...!!
I'M AFRAID
—YOU ARE UNWORTHY
—OF MOMOKO
NO...
I WOULD DO ANYTHING TO SUPPORT THE TWELVE CLANS!
I WILL TAKE WHATEVER MEASURES NECESSARY TO CORRECT MY FALSEHOOD!
PLEASE UNDERSTAND, SENDAYUU!

PLEASE ALLOW KOUSHI TO REMAIN WITH MOMOKO JUST A LITTLE LONGER!
I DO NOT NEED THE INUZUKA CLAN'S POSITION AS HEAD OF THE EASTERN ARMY!
I CARE NOT FOR MY OWN FATE!

I WILL MAKE KOUSHI WORTHY OF THE TWELVE GENER-ALS...
GIVE US TIME, FATHER AND SON!!
WORTHY OF YOU AND YOUR DAUGH-TER... A PROUD AND MIGHTY MAN!!

UNKEN...

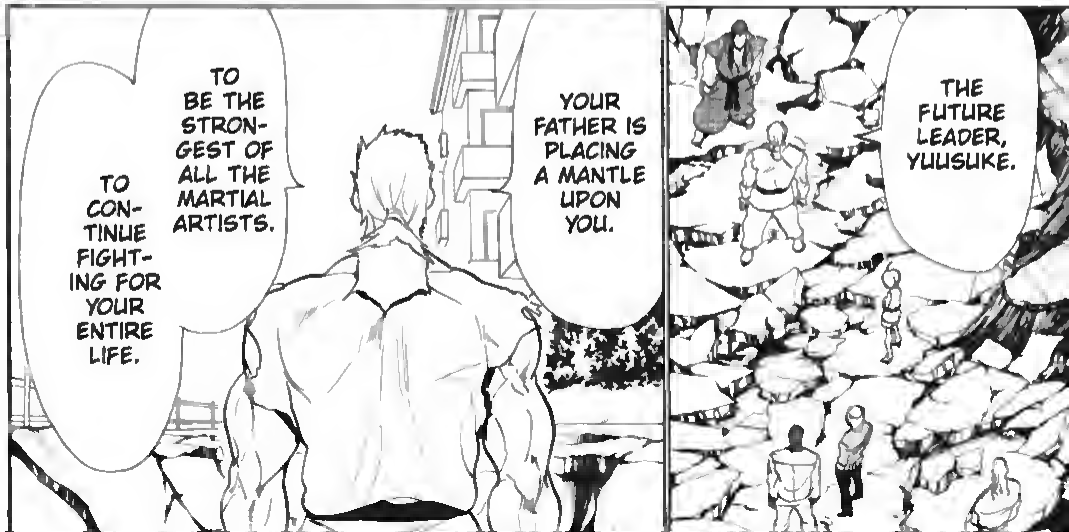
.....?
BUT THE SAME IS TRUE OF SONEDA AND THE OTHER CLANS WHO WERE ATTACKED!

I THINK WE ALL UNDER-STAND UNKEN-SAN'S DEDICATION TO HIS SON.
SENDA-YUU-SAN...

UNKEN-SAN, YOU KNOW BETTER THAN ANYONE...
...THAT THE LEADERS OF EAST AND WEST MUST BE THE STRONGEST OF OUR KIND.
IF KOUSHI-KUN DOES NOT HAVE THE POWER OR WILL...

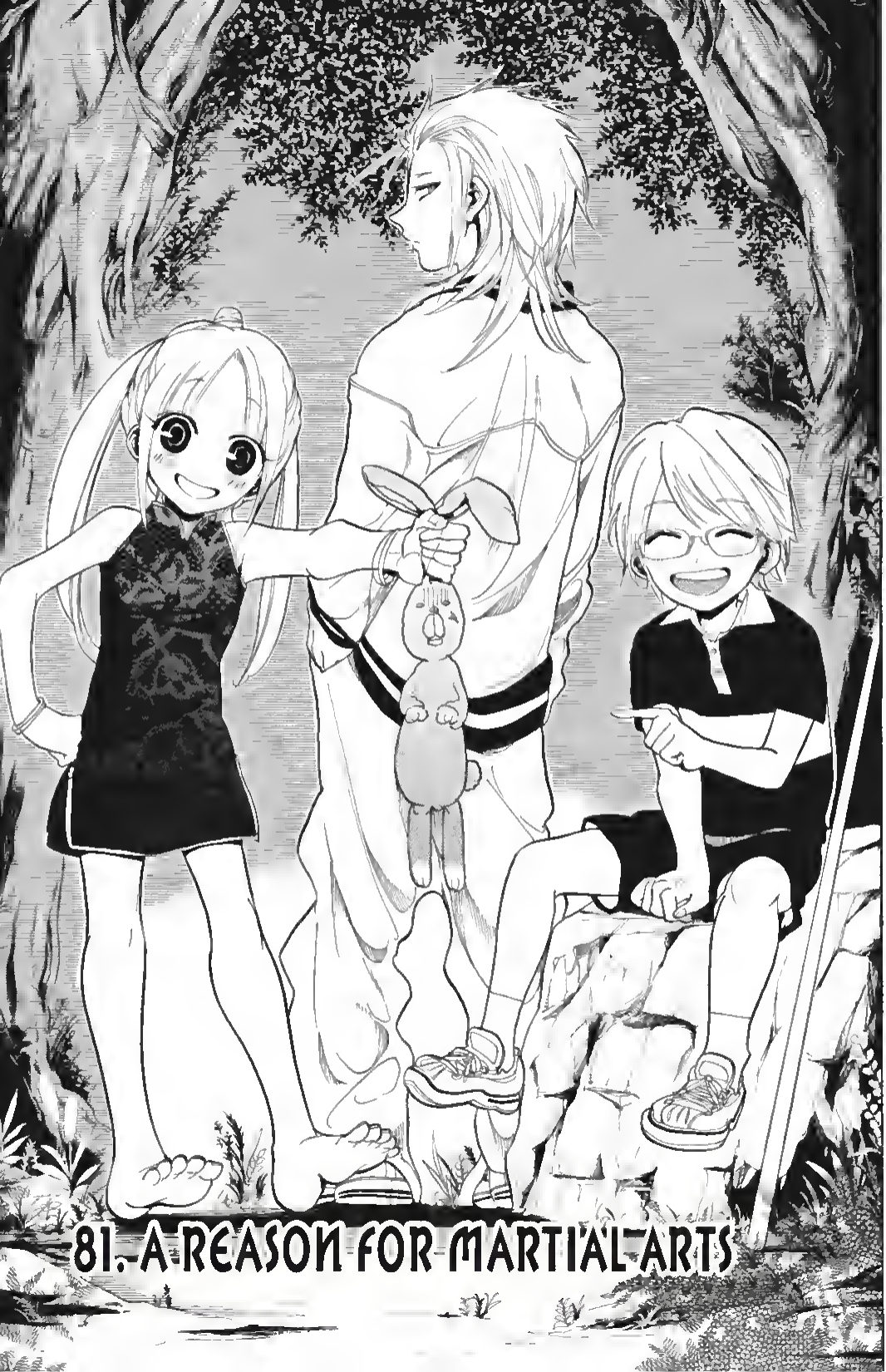
MIKI-HISA!
...YOU MUST RECONSIDER WHO WILL BE THE NEXT LEADER OF THE EASTERN ARMY!
FOR THE SAKE OF ALL MARTIAL ARTISTS...

YUUSUKE UNDERTOOK THIS PERSONAL ESCORT DUTY...
...FOR THE SAKE OF PEACE FOR ALL.
...THEN I NOMINATE YUUSUKE FOR THE NEXT HEAD OF THE EASTERN ARMY.
HE HAS BEEN GUARDING KOUSHI-KUN...
...AND MOMOKO-SAN...
...!?


TO BE THE STRONGEST OF ALL THE MARTIAL ARTISTS.
TO CONTINUE FIGHTING FOR YOUR ENTIRE LIFE.
YOUR FATHER IS PLACING A MANTLE UPON YOU.
THE FUTURE LEADER, YUUSUKE.

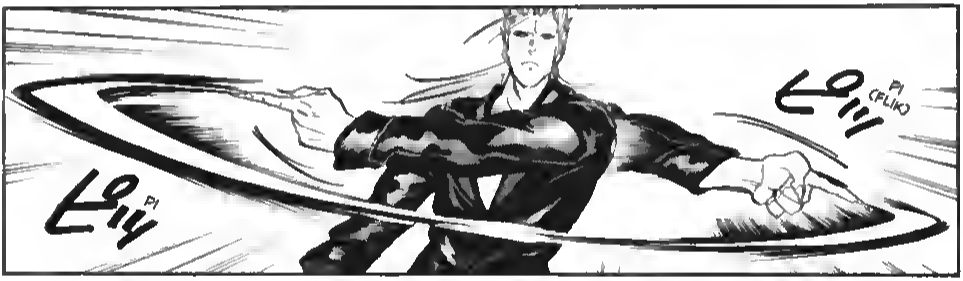
INDEED...
I AM PREPARED FOR THAT.
I WAS BORN A MARTIAL ARTIST.
MEAN-ING...
YOU CAN'T...
!?
WE WILL REDETERMINE THE FUTURE LEADER OF THE EAST BEFORE THEIR EYES.
MIKIHISA, BRING ALL THE CONCERNED CLANS TOGETHER.
WE CANNOT REASON-ABLY PROTEST, UNKEN.
IT'S BEEN THIS WAY SINCE WE WERE BORN.

CHAPTER 80. BREAKDOWN — END



81. A REASON FOR MARTIAL ARTS

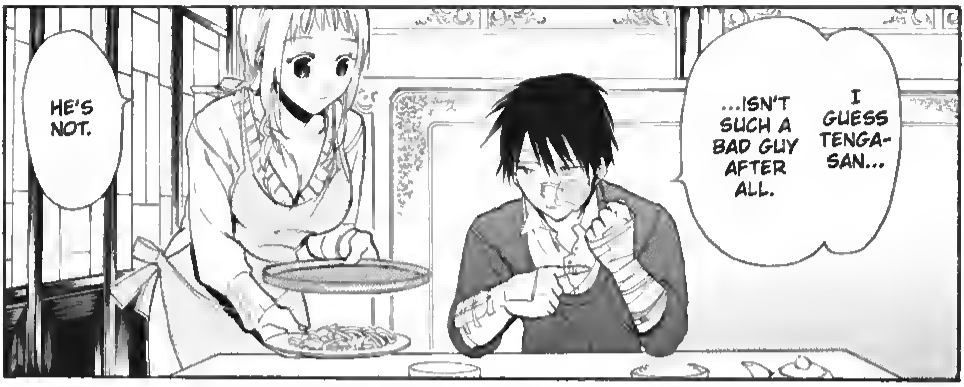
HAAAAAA!

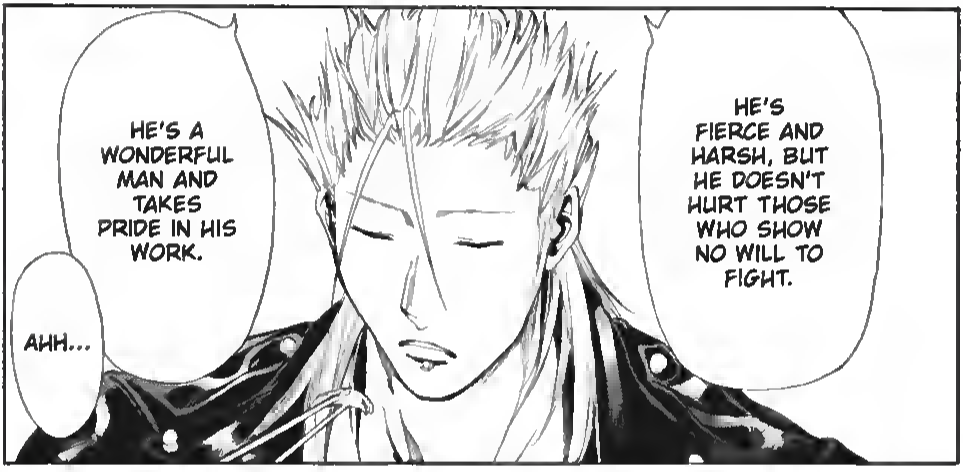

PI
(FLIK)
PI

DOFU...
(DMF)
DOFU

RA
RA
(LEAD)

YES! I DIDN'T GET—
GO (WHAM)


HE'S NOT.
I GUESS TENGA-SAN...
...ISN'T SUCH A BAD GUY AFTER ALL.


HE'S A WONDERFUL MAN AND TAKES PRIDE IN HIS WORK.
HE'S FIERCE AND HARSH, BUT HE DOESN'T HURT THOSE WHO SHOW NO WILL TO FIGHT.
AHH...

SHIIN
(SILENCE)

.....
UMM...
...YOU KNOW...
WHAT DO YOU...
YES?
HEY.

HUH?
WHAT IS YOUR REA-SON...
...FOR PRAC-TICING MARTIAL ARTS?
...WITH YOUR FUTURE?
...WHAT DO YOU WISH TO DO...
YOU MUST HAVE HEARD ABOUT YOUR SHIKAGO POWERS.
WEIRD... WHAT IS THIS, A JOB INTER-VIEW?
ドキ ドキ
SFX. DOKI (BADUM) DOKI
WELL...
...MY CURRENT OBJECTIVE IS...
.....
.....
IF YOU ARE TO CONTROL THE FATE OF MARTIAL ARTS...
...YOU MUST USE IT!!

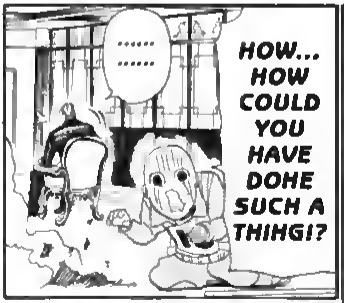
TO BE ABLE TO FACE MY FRIENDS WITHOUT SHAME.
TO BE STRON-GER.
...TO PUT MY FATHER AT EASE.

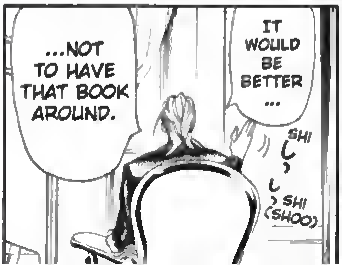
LOOKS LIKE KOUSHI ISN'T DEVELOPING THE WAY YOU'D HOPED, TENGA.

A SECRET MANUSCRIPT ABOUT THE FORBIDDEN SHIKAGO CLAN...
BUT NEVER MIND THAT... I'VE GOT SOMETHING FOR YOU.

...ONLY THE ENLIGHTENED MEMBERS KNEW OF WHAT IS IN THIS BOOK.
AND EVEN AMONG THE SHIKAGO CLAN ITSELF...
ONLY GEKKOU BOSATSU AND I KNOW THE DETAILS WITHIN.
THIS IS A SHOCKING TRUTH THAT HAS NEVER BEEN REVEALED BEFORE.

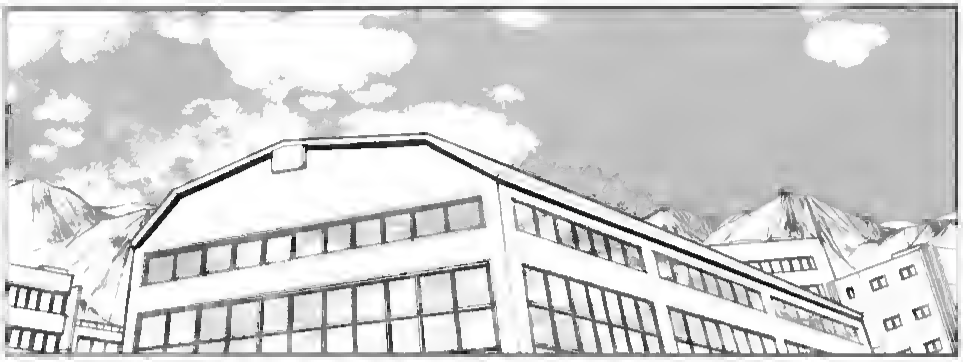
PATAN (THUMP)
SU (SWISH)
SO, WHAT DO YOU SAY?
.....
.....


.....
.....
HOW... HOW COULD YOU HAVE DOHE SUCH A THIHG!?

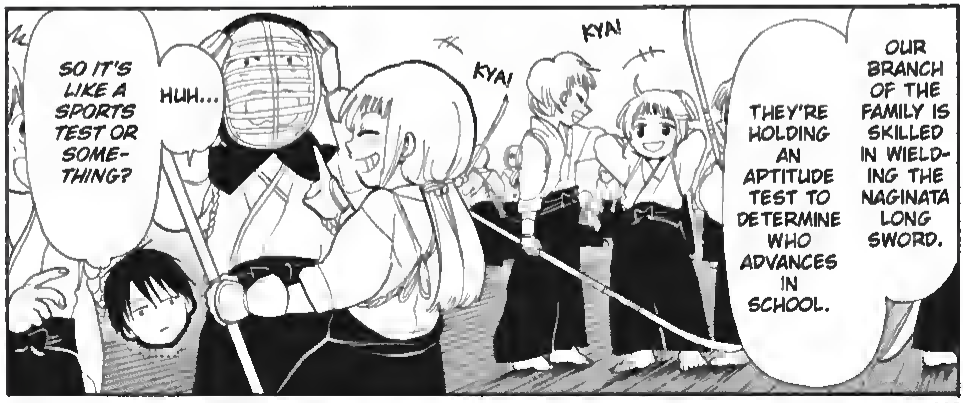

...NOT TO HAVE THAT BOOK AROUND.
IT WOULD BE BETTER ...
SHI
SHI (SHOO)

AHH!! THE SECRET MANU-SCRIPT !!!
BOOO (BWFF)
12

LISTEN CLOSELY! THE ACTIVATION OF KOUSHI'S ART IS AS THAT BOOK SAYS...
HMPH... WELL, AT LEAST YOU UNDERSTAND THE SITUATION...
...YOU MUST TEACH HIM HOW TO GO ABOUT DEVELOPING IT...
...WITHOUT LETTING HIM KNOW A THING!



HUH? NO TRAINING TODAY?
WE'RE OBSERVING.
MY BROTHER IS BEING TESTED.
わいわい
WAI (WHEE)
-WAI
GAYA (YAMMER)
ガヤガヤ
GAYA

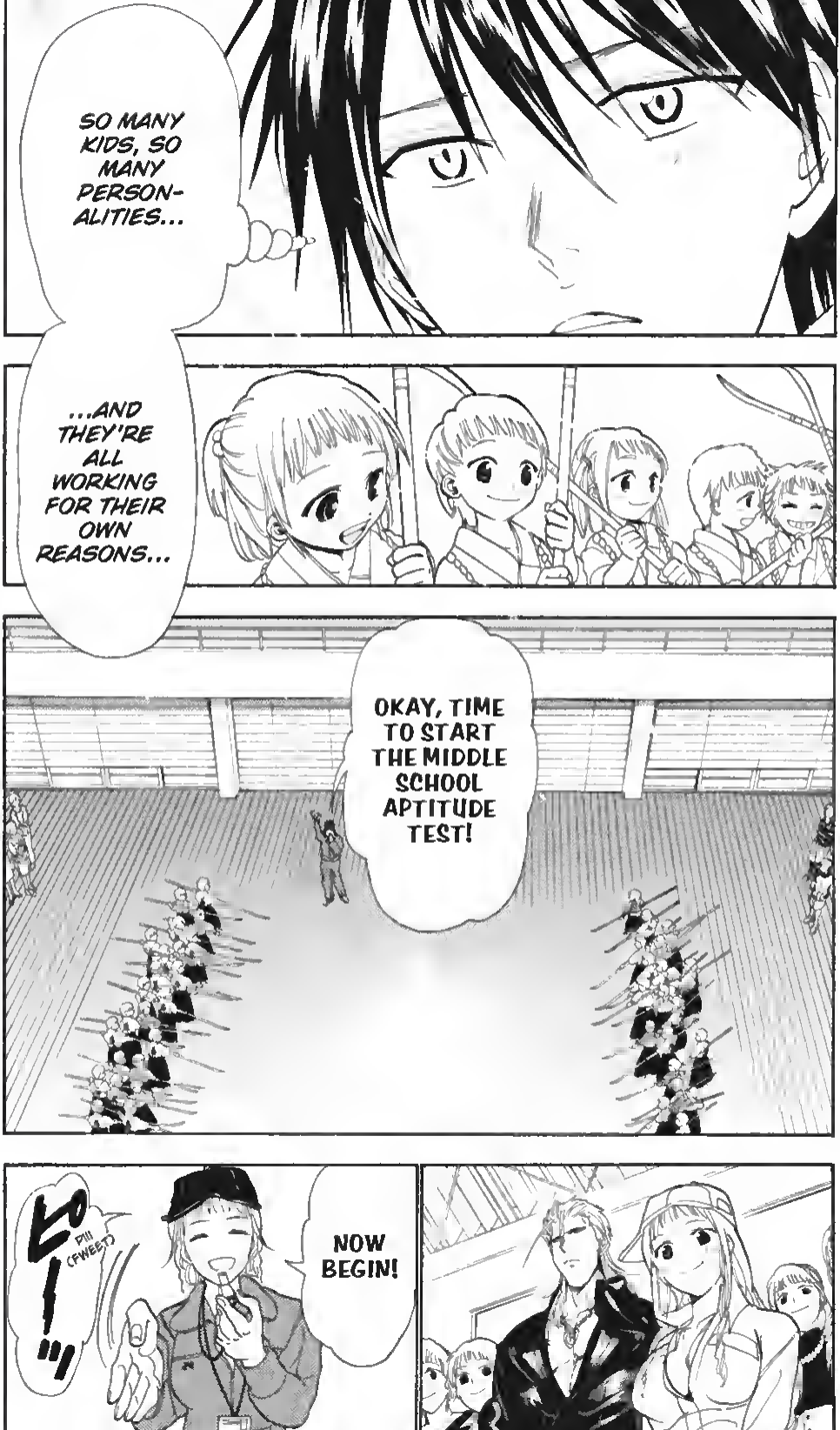

OUR BRANCH OF THE FAMILY IS SKILLED IN WIELDING THE NAGINATA LONG SWORD.
THEY'RE HOLDING AN APTITUDE TEST TO DETERMINE WHO ADVANCES IN SCHOOL.
KYA!
KYA!
HUH...
SO IT'S LIKE A SPORTS TEST OR SOMETHING?

OH, LOOK AT YOU!
STOP STUDYING AND START TRAINING!
I'VE HEARD THAT ONE BEFORE ...
ACTU-ALLY ...
SHIIN (SILENCE)
.....
.....
N-NO! I DON'T!
WHY WOULD I LIKE THAT!?
YOU LIKE STUDY-ING?
I WISH I COULD BE A TEACHER...
I DON'T WANT... TO BE A WARRIOR...

ARGH, IF ONLY THERE WERE NO MARTIAL ARTS!
THEN I COULD LIVE A NORMAL LIFE...

I DON'T LIKE PRACTIC-ING THIS STUFF.
WELL, I GUESS I'M NOT THE ONLY ONE.

I LOVE MARTIAL ARTS!
I WANNA GROW UP AND MARRY A POWERFUL WARRIOR!
I'M GONNA BE STRONG AND MIGHTY LIKE MY DAD!
I LIKE VIDEO GAMES MORE THAN FIGHT-ING...
SHH! YOU'LL GET IN TROU-BLE!
LOOK AT THEM ...
ALL DIFFER-ENT...


SO MANY KIDS, SO MANY PERSON-ALITIES...
...AND THEY'RE ALL WORKING FOR THEIR OWN REASONS...
OKAY, TIME TO START THE MIDDLE SCHOOL APTITUDE TEST!
ピ! (PWEE!)
NOW BEGIN!

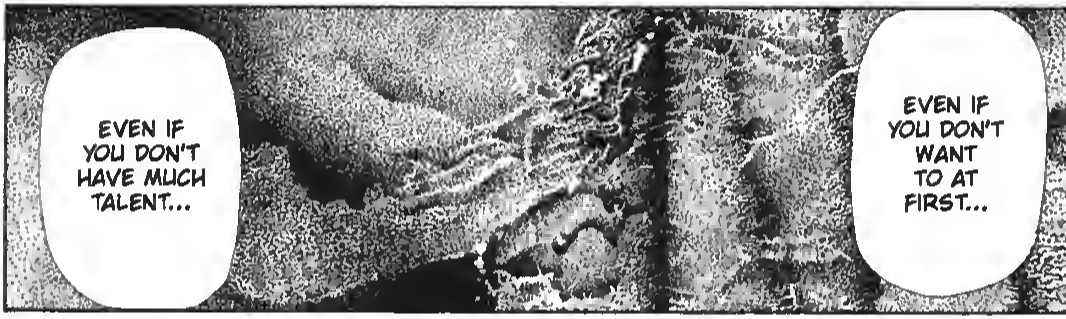
WA (RAHH)
!!
GYO (SHOCK)
THIS SEEMS... LESS LIKE A TEST...
...AND MORE LIKE WARFARE...

...NOT ALL OF THEM WANT TO FIGHT...
BUT...
.....
BUT OF COURSE.
I CAN'T TAKE IT ANY-MORE!!
DO YOU STILL THINK THAT ATTITUDE WILL CUT IT IN THE WORLD OF MARTIAL ARTS?
SO, IN THE LINE OF FIRE, YOU RUN...
YOU ARE NO LONGER A WARRIOR!
.....!!
EEK!

I DON'T WANT... TO BE A WARRIOR...
I WISH I COULD BE A TEACHER...
ARGH, IF ONLY THERE WERE NO MARTIAL ARTS!

THEN I COULD LIVE A NORMAL LIFE...
STOP!!!!

BUT...
WHY PRO-TECT HIM?
HE HAS NEITHER THE WILL NOR ABILITY TO FIGHT.
KI (GLARE)
UH... I MEAN...
GASP!!


EVEN IF YOU DON'T HAVE MUCH TALENT...
EVEN IF YOU DON'T WANT TO AT FIRST...

MARTIAL ARTISTS WHO CANNOT FIGHT WITH-OUT A REASON?
...AND THEIR OWN BATTLES TO FIGHT...
EVERY-ONE HAS THEIR OWN REASONS...

DOES THEIR EXIS-TENCE HAVE VALUE?

IS HE IN A GOOD MOOD?
?
.....
TENGA-SAMA...
WHAT WAS THE PURPOSE OF THIS ACT?
I THOUGHT HE WASN'T A BAD PERSON...
ZA (SKF)
ZA
ZA
...BUT I WAS WRONG.

SFX: JI (STARE)

HE'S A CRUEL MAN, DRIVEN INSANE FOR THE SAKE OF HIS MARTIAL ARTS!
ZA
ZA
ZA
I'LL NEVER BE LIKE HIM!

ZA
YOU ARE...
...KOUSHI INUZUKA-DONO?

NOW.
.....?
HAVE EVERY-ONE HERE LEAVE.
HEY...
HUH?
?
WE HAVE INTER-FERENCE ...
.....
PIKU (TWITCH)

RALLY ALL THE CLANS TOGETHER.
GOOD. TAKE HIM STRAIGHT TO THE DUELING GROUNDS.
We've found Koushi Inuzuka.

...THE FINAL PIECE WILL BE IN PLACE.
ONCE WE GET THE LAST ROAD-BLOCKS OUT OF THE WAY...

HYUOOO (WHOOSH)

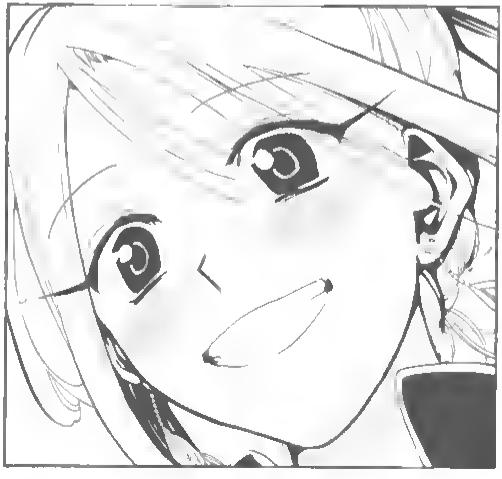
YOU'RE ENJOYING YOURSELF.
.....

EEEK! I CAN'T TAKE ALL THIS PREACHING! ♡
YOU NEED TO MOVE PAST THESE NONSENSICAL GAMES.
YOU'RE THE ELDEST DAUGHTER OF THE MAIN FAMILY.

IT'S BEEN A WHILE, TENGA-NII.
ニヤ NIYA (SMIRK)
ニヤ NIYA

...WITH MARTIAL ARTIST BLOOD...
WE MAY BOTH BE BORN...
NO, I SUPPOSE YOU WOULDN'T UNDERSTAND THEM.
...THAT THE THINGS WE ENJOYED WERE NOT QUITE THE SAME.
...BUT I'VE ALWAYS FELT...
...YOU WERE INCREDIBLY... BORING ...
IN FACT, I'VE ALWAYS FELT...
...YOU'LL ENJOY TODAY.
BUT I SINCERELY HOPE...

CHAPTER 81. A REASON FOR MATRIAL ARTS – END

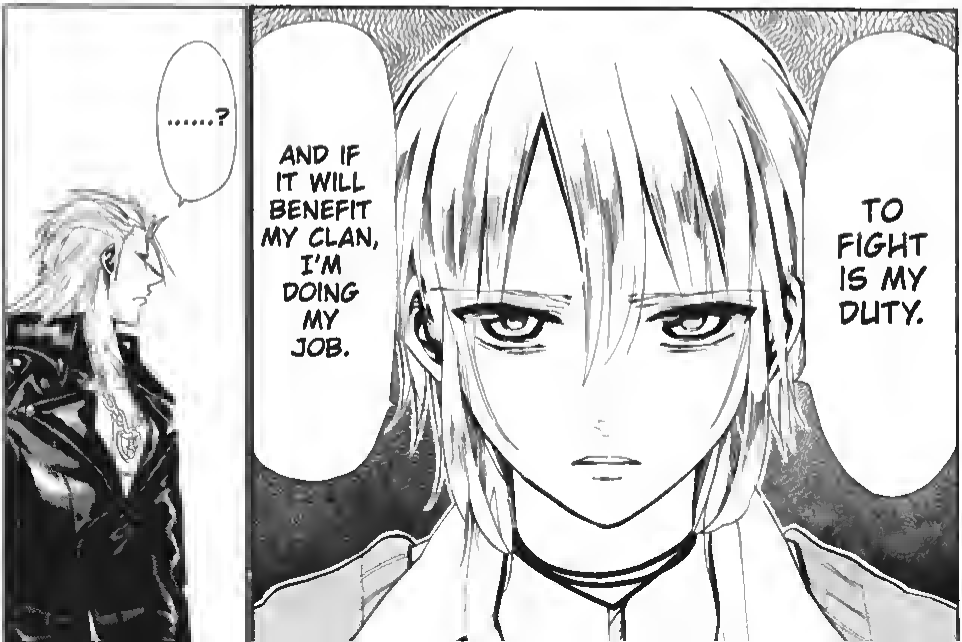


SUMOMOMO,MOMOMO

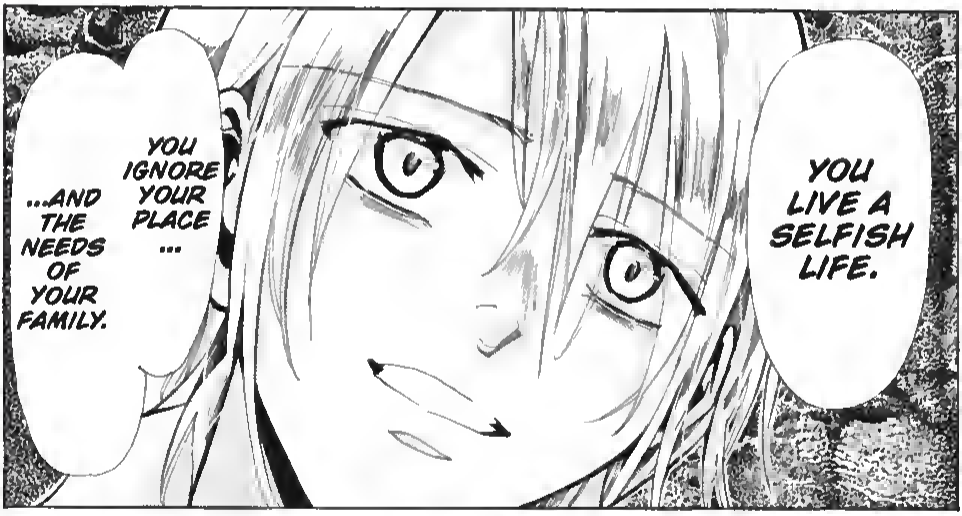
82. YUUSUKE ENDOU VS. TENGA KOGANEI

YOU'VE ALWAYS APPRECIATED THE OPPORTUNITY TO FIGHT THE POWERFUL.
AS WORTHY CHALLENGERS EVENTUALLY DRIED UP, YOU BECAME MORE AND MORE FRUSTRATED...
...ALTHOUGH I MUST ADMIT I'VE NO CLUE WHAT YOU FOUND SO FUN ABOUT IT...

IF ANYTHING, I DERIVE MORE ENJOYMENT FROM PICKING APART THE WEAK.
WHAT ABOUT YOU, YUU-KUN?
.....
.....
THERE IS NO "FUN" IN MARTIAL ARTS... OR ANY OTHER EMOTION, FOR THAT MATTER.


TO FIGHT IS MY DUTY.
AND IF IT WILL BENEFIT MY CLAN, I'M DOING MY JOB.
.....?

WE WERE THE ONES WHO SET THAT UP, THOUGH.
I SUPPOSE YOU WOULDN'T UNDERSTAND.
YOU CHASED OUT YOUR OWN FATHER AND BECAME HEAD OF THE FAMILY, ALL FOR THE SAKE OF YOUR DESIRE TO FIGHT, DIDN'T YOU?
WHO IS THIS BOY?
HE LOOKS AS IF HE'S DEAD ON HIS FEET.
.....
PIKU (TWITCH)


YOU LIVE A SELFISH LIFE.
YOU IGNORE YOUR PLACE ...
...AND THE NEEDS OF YOUR FAMILY.

.....
.....
...KOUSHI INUZUKA, A FOOL?
YOU'RE A FOOL, THE SAME AS KOUSHI INUZUKA.

YOU SEEM A FAR GREATER FOOL TO ME.
!!
GO

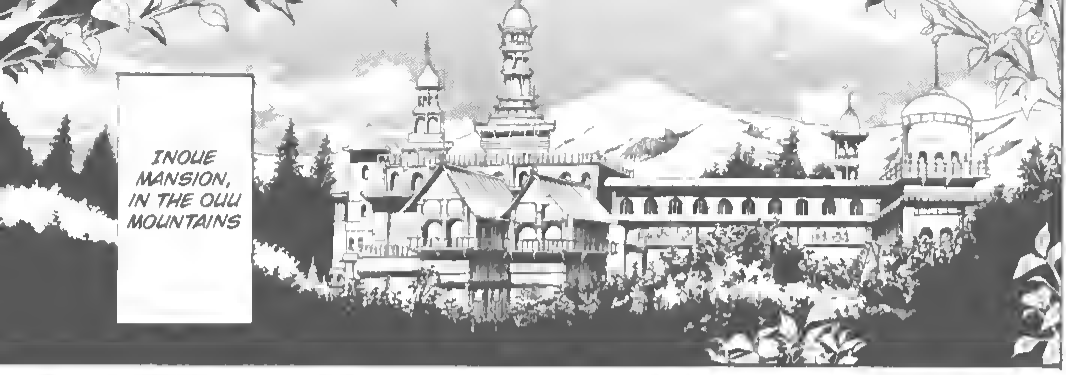
I'LL KILL YOU!
BOKOO (CRUNCH)
MEKI (CRAK)
GAN (WHAM)

.....
.....
PERHAPS THIS IS HOW THOSE HUMANS WHO CANNOT PERFORM MARTIAL ARTS FEEL...
IT IS A STRANGE FEELING ...
GU (CLENCH)

AND NOW THIS BOY COMES TO INTERFERE...
I WOULD HAVE LIKED...
...TO OBSERVE THAT SKILL JUST A BIT LONGER...

DASH
CHIHIRO SAITO

DOGAAN
(KABOOM)
!?
TENGA-SAMA...
WHAT JUST HAP-PENED ...!?


INOUE MANSION, IN THE OUU MOUNTAINS

WHAT IS THIS...!?

WHY IS GRANDMA BEING HELD CAPTIVE!?

I'LL LET UNKEN AND SENDAYUU KNOW!
VERY WELL, SANAE! YOU CONTINUE LOOKING FOR THE OTHER CHILDREN!
TWO DAYS AGO
WHAT? ANCIENT POWER!?
PLOT TO DEFEAT DOG AND DRAG-ON!?
I'M AFRAID YOU CAN'T DO THAT, KIMIE-SAN.
!!
NOT YOU!!

I ASSUME YOU ARE PREPARED FOR WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO YOU AFTER ALL OF THIS IS DONE.
FUUUU (HISSS)

MOU-
TATSU!!
ドン
DON
(BOOM)

I'LL RIP OFF YOUR BALLS...
...WITH THE HEEL OF MY SHOE!
ZOOO (CHILL)

ガクガク
GAKU (SHIVER) GAKU

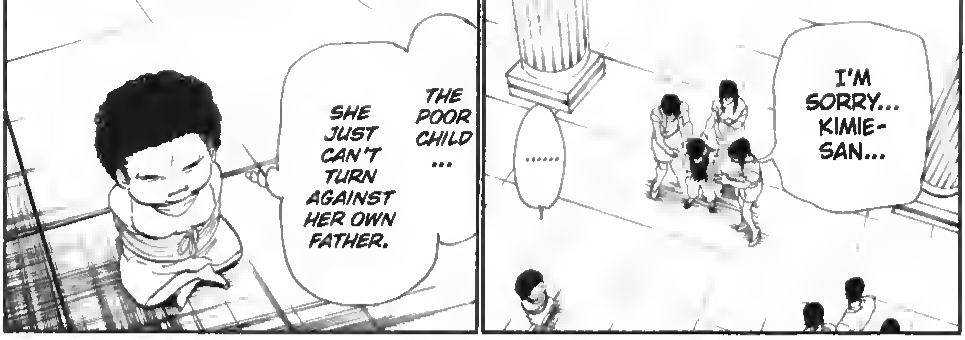
NO! I... I DON'T HAVE A CHOICE ...!
THE HEAVY HAND OF THE POWER-FUL HAS COM-PELLED ME TO—
NOT TO WORRY

LET'S SHOW THAT UNKEN INUZUKA THE ERROR OF HIS WAYS.
INOUE WILL SUFFER NO RETALIA-TION...
WE ALREADY HAVE NINE OF THE CLANS IN AGREEMENT WITH THE PLAN.
.....
Y... YEAH! HA-HA-HA...
STUPID UNKEN! YOU'RE GONNA GET IT, PAL!!

JUST BECAUSE THEY WERE IN THEIR SUITS THEY CAUGHT ME UNAWARES...?
THIS IS STRANGE... THESE MEN ARE LOWER MEMBERS OF THE ENDOU CLAN.

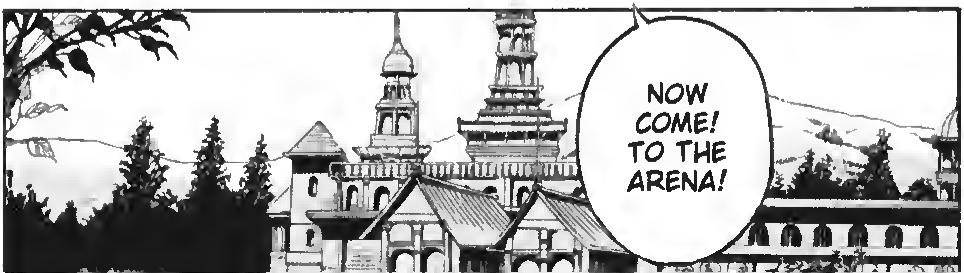
THIS MUST BE THAT ANCIENT POWER SANAE SPOKE OF!
HAVE THEY GROWN... STRONGER!?

YOUR OLD DAD NEVER MANAGED TO GAIN THIS POWER ON HIS OWN...
NO TALENT
...BUT IF YOU WISH, YOU CAN HAVE THIS "SPECIAL POWER" FOR YOURSELF, SON!
YOU CAN BE MIGHTY AND DO GREAT THINGS IN MY STEAD.
.....
SHINTAROU!
.....


I'M SORRY... KIMIE-SAN...
.....
THE POOR CHILD ...
SHE JUST CAN'T TURN AGAINST HER OWN FATHER.

NINE CLANS? WHAT ABOUT TENKA? AND HANZOU?
WE CAN'T "DEFEAT" THEM! I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THIS PLAN, FATHER...
HA-HA-HA! NOT TO WORRY, NOT TO WORRY!
THERE'S NOTHING UNDER-HANDED ABOUT THIS, SON...

IT WILL BE OFFICIAL, JUST AS IT WAS WITH YOU.
THIS IS A LEGITIMATE *"DUEL TO DETERMINE THE LEADER OF THE EASTERN ARMY"*!


NOW COME! TO THE ARENA!

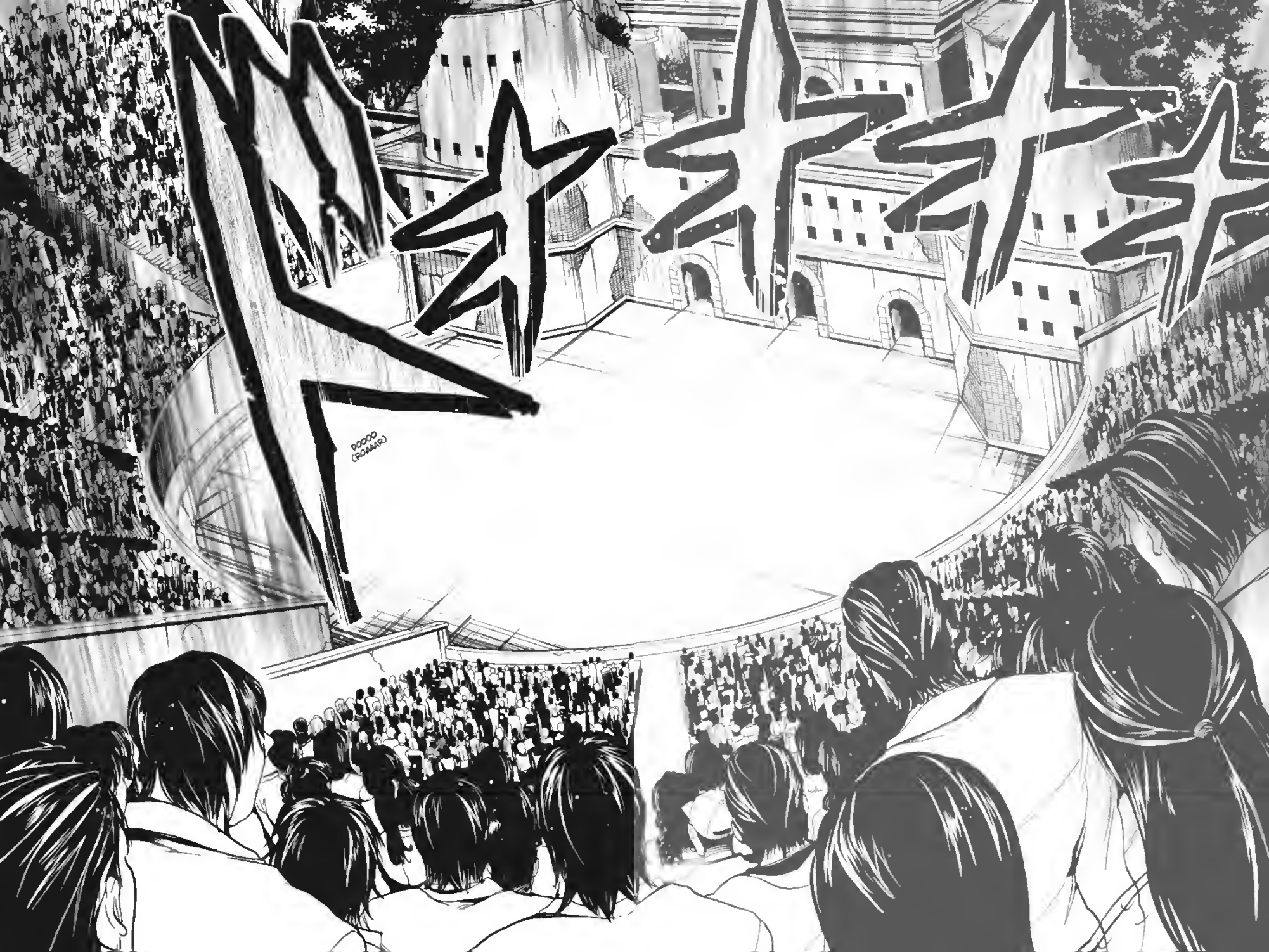
A DUEL TO DETERMINE THE LEADER OF THE EASTERN ARMY?

"FOR EAST AND WEST TO MAINTAIN THEIR BALANCE ...
"...EACH SIDE MUST BE LED BY ITS STRONGEST MEMBER AT ALL TIMES.
INDEED.
12

YOU STOOD IN AS WITNESS IN THE PAST, WHEN MATOBA AND INOUE MADE THEIR CHALLENGES.
WILL YOU DO US THE HONOR AGAIN?
PERHAPS.
WHO IS OUR NEW WARRIOR?
"THEREFORE, IF ANY MAN SHOULD THINK HIMSELF WORTHY, HE IS ENTITLED TO A DUEL."
ISN'T THAT RIGHT?

.....
HA-HA. I AM EMBARRASSED TO ADMIT IT IS MY OWN SON.
HMPH. YOUR SON WILL NEVER BE NEXT IN LINE TO RULE THE EASTERN ARMY.
YOU HAVEN'T SHOWN YOUR TAIL, BUT I AM WELL AWARE OF YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN THAT RECENT INCIDENT WITH KOGANEI.
I MUST MAKE THINGS AMBIGUOUS.
OH, BUT I'M AFRAID KOUSHI HAS GONE MISSING.
AT ANY RATE, WE SHALL HOLD THIS DUEL SOMETIME IN THE NEAR FUTURE...
HO-HO-HO.
.....
THAT WON'T BE A PROBLEM. WE HAVE ALREADY FOUND KOUSHI-KUN.
!?
BY THE WAY, NIKKOU-SAMA...

DO YOU REALLY THINK KOUSHI-KUN...
...HAS THE POWER OR THE RIGHT TO BE A MARTIAL ARTIST?
IF HE DOES, THEN HE WILL HAVE TO PROVE IT TO EVERYONE TODAY...
"EVERY-ONE"!?
WHAT...? HOW MUCH DOES HE KNOW!?
!!
M-MY GOOD-NESS!
12


DOOOO
(RUMMM)

THERE ARE NINE CLANS PRESENT: ENDOU, SONEDA, USHIGOME, KOGANEI, UNOU, MIYAMOTO, MINOWA, MATOBA, AND INOUE.

AND THIS FISSURE THAT THREATENS THE TWELVE HEAVENLY GENERALS...
WE, THE ASSEMBLED, HAVE VOICED OUR DOUBTS ABOUT THE WORTHINESS OF KOUSHI INUZUKA-DONO, FUTURE LEADER OF THE EASTERN ARMY!
...NIKKOU-SAMA!!
...CANNOT REMAIN AMBIG-UOUS...
FOR THE FUTURE OF ALL MARTIAL ARTISTS...

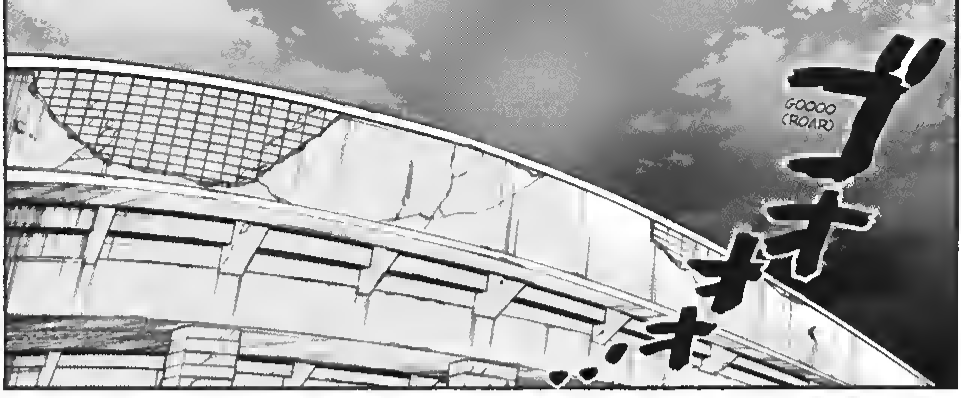
CHAPTER 82. YUUSUKE ENDOU VS. TENGA KOGANEI – END

83. THE FINAL DUEL (1)

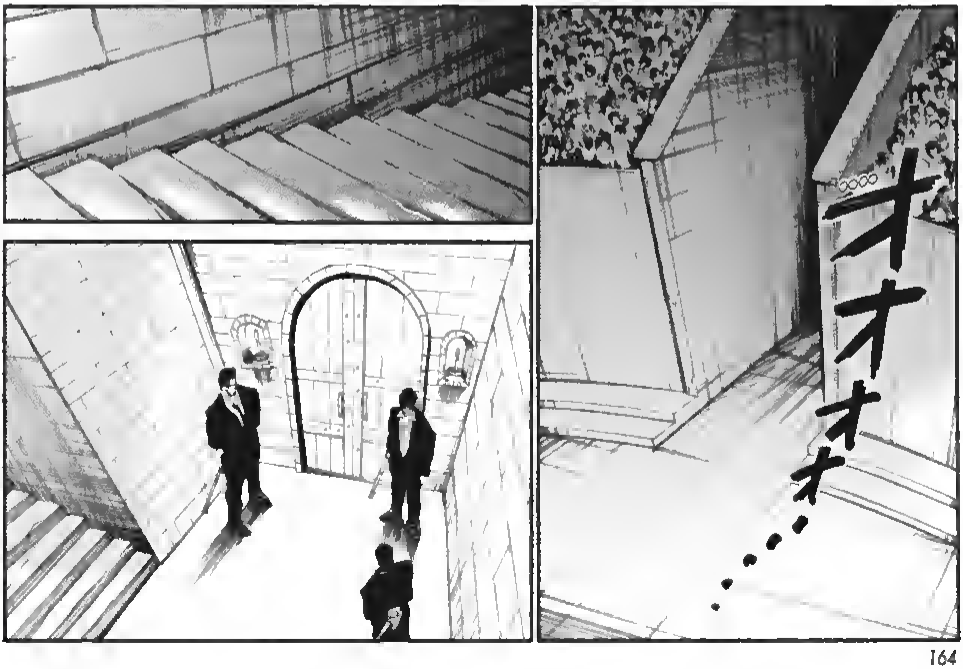
GOOOO
...OF LEADING THE THOU-SANDS OF OUR NUMBER INTO THE FUTURE!
DETERMINE WHICH MAN IS TRULY WORTHY...
SEE FOR YOUR-SELVES!
MY FELLOW MARTIAL ARTISTS!

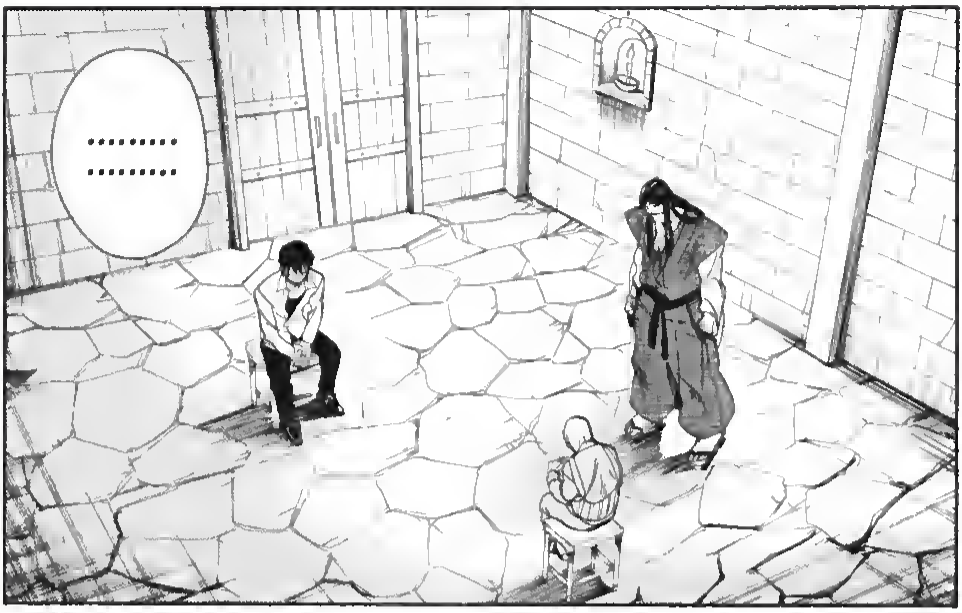
TO MISREPRESENT ONE'S STRENGTH IS A TERRIBLE CRIME!
THIS MAN MUST BE THE STRONGEST AMONG US!
THE NAME...
THINK OF THE BLOOD OF YOUR CLAN...
THE PRIDE...
AND DO NOT STAND FOR A FALSE KING!!!

UOOOOO (RAAAHH)
BIRI
BIRI
BIRI (TRMBL)
……!!?


GOOOO (ROAR)
ゴオオオ…

SO PREPARE TO BEGIN THE DUEL...
...IN ONE HOUR.
...FROM KOGANEI VILLAGE IN AN HOUR.
YUUSUKE WILL RETURN...


ゴオオオ…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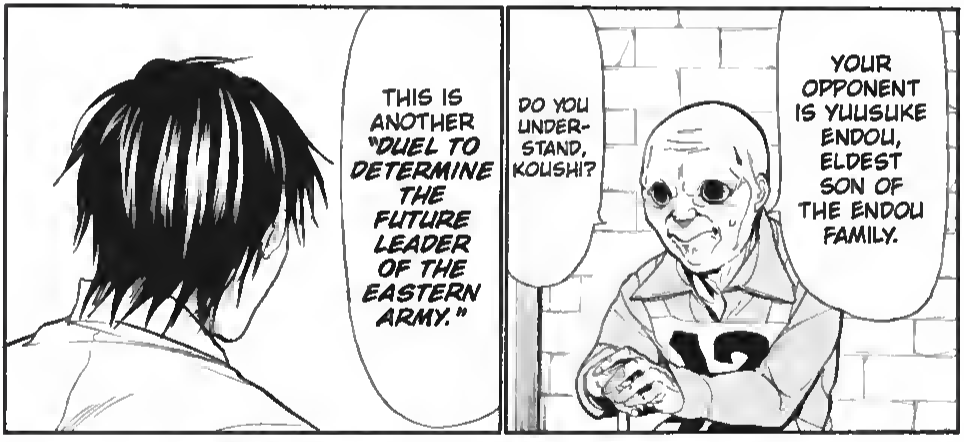
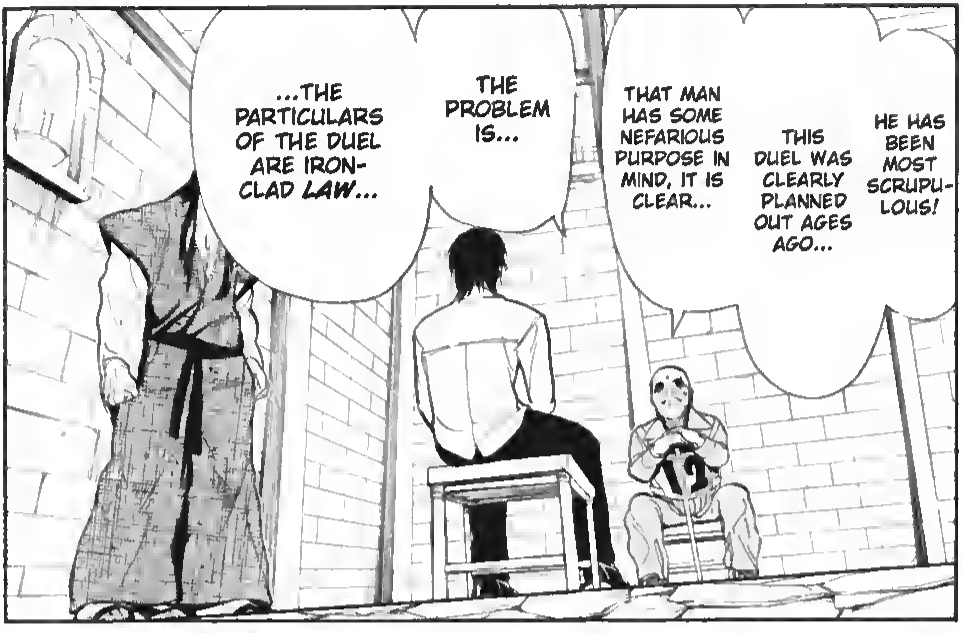
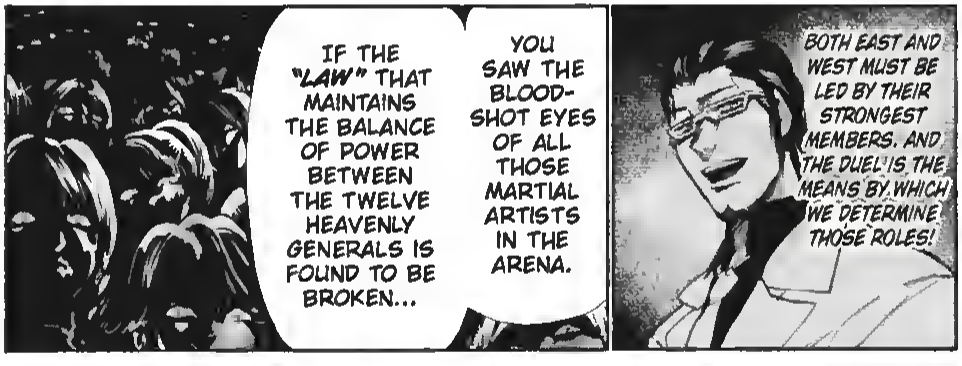

THIS IS ANOTHER "DUEL TO DETERMINE THE FUTURE LEADER OF THE EASTERN ARMY."
DO YOU UNDER-STAND, KOUSHI?
YOUR OPPONENT IS YUUSUKE ENDOU, ELDEST SON OF THE ENDOU FAMILY.

HE HAS BROUGHT THEM HERE TO BEAR WITNESS TO THE OUTCOME OF THIS DUEL.
...MIKIHISA HAS SUCCEEDED IN TURNING MOST OF THE CLANS AGAINST INUZUKA.
SOME-HOW...
BUT PARLOR TRICKS WILL NOT CARRY YOU HERE AS THEY DID WITH SHINTAROU.


...THE PARTICULARS OF THE DUEL ARE IRON-CLAD LAW...
THE PROBLEM IS...
THAT MAN HAS SOME NEFARIOUS PURPOSE IN MIND, IT IS CLEAR...
THIS DUEL WAS CLEARLY PLANNED OUT AGES AGO...
HE HAS BEEN MOST SCRUPULOUS!


IF THE "LAW" THAT MAINTAINS THE BALANCE OF POWER BETWEEN THE TWELVE HEAVENLY GENERALS IS FOUND TO BE BROKEN...
YOU SAW THE BLOOD-SHOT EYES OF ALL THOSE MARTIAL ARTISTS IN THE ARENA.
BOTH EAST AND WEST MUST BE LED BY THEIR STRONGEST MEMBERS. AND THE DUEL IS THE MEANS BY WHICH WE DETERMINE THOSE ROLES!

.....
.....
...THERE WILL BE A WAR.

.....
.....
...WE CANNOT INSIST THAT THIS DUEL BE CALLED OFF.
IN EITHER CASE...
...THAT SUCH IS MIKIHISA'S TRUE GOAL.
IN FACT, IT COULD BE...
NIKKOU-SAMA...
.....
.....
.....
.....
I SEE...
.....
!
DAD...
...FOR US TO HELP KOUSHI ESCAPE...?
WOULD IT BE POS-SIBLE...

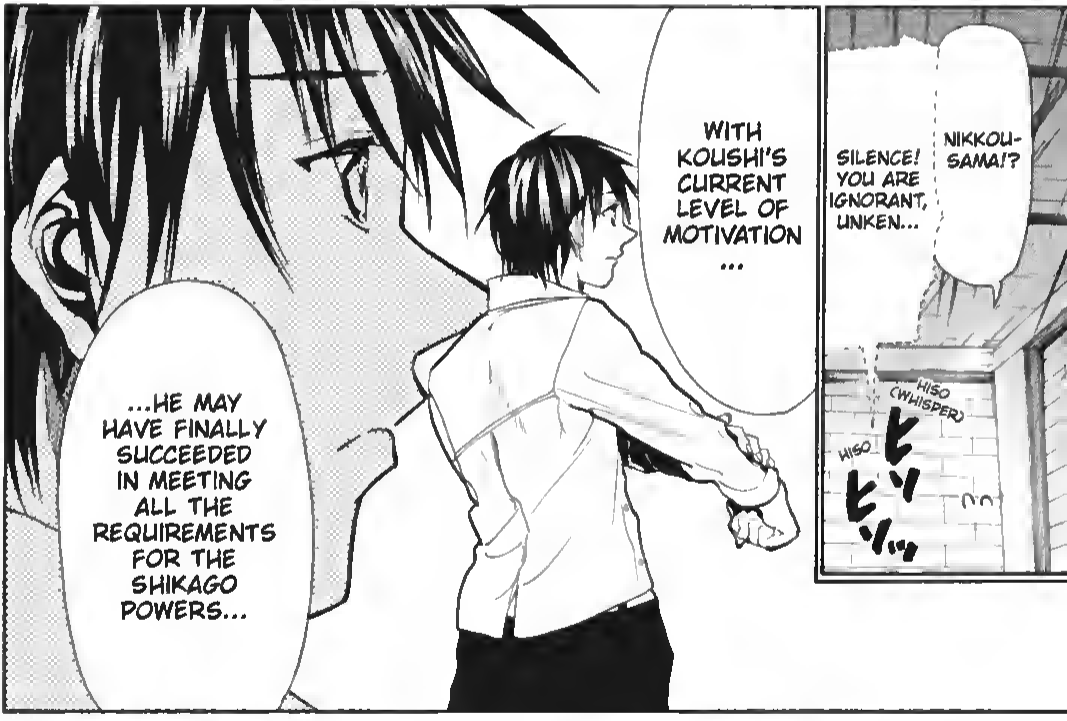
KOUSHI ...
.....
...FOR-GIVE ME.
IT MAY MEAN A LIFE SPENT ON THE RUN...
...BUT IT IS BETTER THAN BEING SLAUGH-TERED HERE...
...I WOULD WISH THAT YOU HAD BEEN BORN...
IF I COULD MAKE IT SO...
.....
...TO A NORMAL FAMILY...
I AM SORRY THAT YOU HAD TO BE BORN TO A FATHER LIKE ME.

.....
.....
.....
EVERYONE'S BOUND BY CERTAIN THINGS AT BIRTH.
DON'T APOLO-GIZE, DAD.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
I NEED TO FIGHT.
BUT SAYING IT'S YOUR FAMILY'S *FAULT* WON'T GET YOU ANYWHERE.

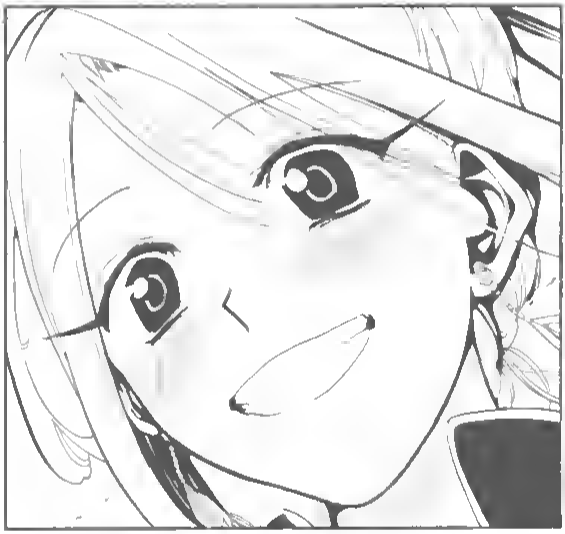
AND I AGREE WITH THEM NOW.
THAT'S WHAT THE OTHERS WOULD SAY.
HUH?
THEY'RE ALL HERE TO WATCH, AREN'T THEY?
THE "OTHERS" ...?
.....
HEY, DON'T CRY!
IT'S CREEPY.

HOW COULD I FACE THEM IF I CHOSE A LIFE OF ESCAPE?
!
...WHO I GO TO SCHOOL WITH.
THE OTHER MARTIAL ARTISTS...
.....
THE FAULT OF MY FAMILY...
WHAT WOULD BE THE POINT OF MY ACTUALLY STARTING TRAINING, IN THAT CASE...?
WAIT, LINKEN!
DON'T BE STUB-BORN...
WELL, WELL ...!
.....
.....

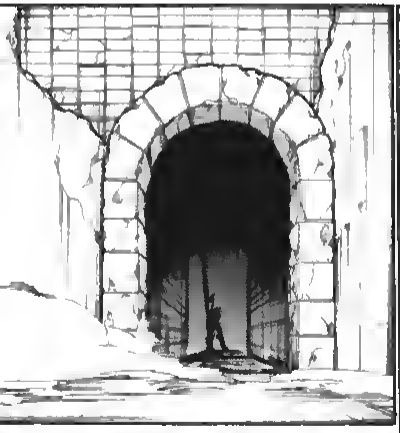
!?
LET HIM FIGHT.


WITH KOUSHI'S CURRENT LEVEL OF MOTIVATION ...
...HE MAY HAVE FINALLY SUCCEEDED IN MEETING ALL THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SHIKAGO POWERS...
NIKKOU-SAMA!?
SILENCE! YOU ARE IGNORANT, UNKEN...
HISO (WHISPER)
HISO

WAS TENGA'S GUIDANCE SUCCESSFUL, THEN...?



WILL YOU TAKE A WEAPON?
UM... SURE...



.....

GU (GRIP)

ZA (ZSH)
ZA
ZA
ZA
RYUOOO (WHOOSH)
...YOU ACTUALLY KIND OF LOOK THE PART!
FROM THIS ANGLE ...

GOOOOO
WHOOOSH
ゴゴゴ
ゴゴゴ!!!

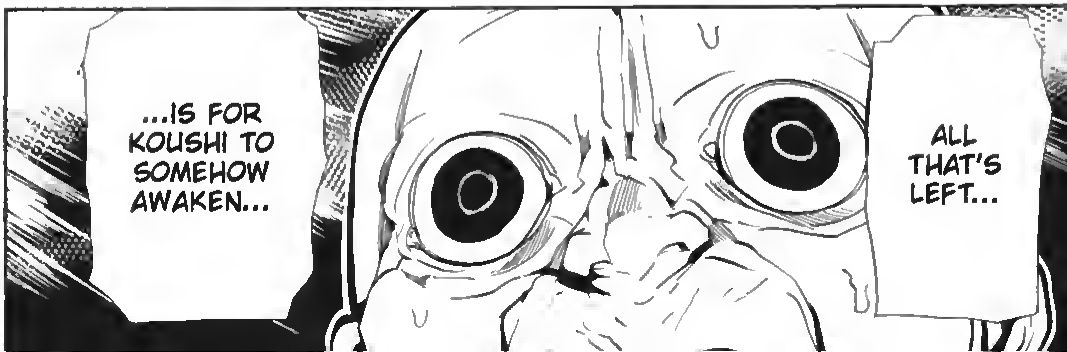
BE-
GIN
!!!

GUWA (SWOOSH)
THIS DUEL WAS CLEARLY PLANNED OUT AGES AGO.
SO YOU TRANSFERRED TO MY SCHOOL FOR THE PURPOSE OF FIGHTING ME.
NOW I FINALLY UNDER-STAND...
...THE REASON YOU WERE SO MAD!

BYU
(WHOOSH)
!!!
HE... DODGED !!!
YOU WON'T GET FAR UNLESS YOU CAN MANAGE THAT MUCH!
OF COURSE HE DID!
!
GEEZ, DON'T JUST IGNORE ME!

KOUSHI IS NO LONGER HELD BACK BY SHINO'S MYRIAD SEAL.
HE HAS THE STAMINA HE NEEDS.
KOUSHI FINALLY POSSESSES WHAT IS NECESSARY TO USE MARTIAL ARTS!

THEIR INNATE BATTLE SKILLS ARE FAR, FAR INFERIOR TO THOSE OF INUZUKA!
AND THE ENDOU CLAN HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE "BRAIN" OF THE TWELVE HEAVENLY GENERALS.


...IS FOR KOUSHI TO SOMEHOW AWAKEN...
ALL THAT'S LEFT...

MAIN ENDOU MANSION
...THE ANCIENT POWER OF HIS INUZUKA AND SHIKAGO HERITAGE!!
I NEED TO FIND THE WAY...
...TO BRING BACK THE ANCIENT POWER...
KOGANEI VILLAGE MAIN MANSION
...AND GET IT TO INUZUKA-KUN!

WE JUST HAVE TO MAKE IT IN TIME ...!!

REFUSAL TICKET

SEX TICKET (NORMAL)

REFUSAL TICKET

SEX TICKET (NORMAL)

REFUSAL TICKET

SEX TICKET (ABNORMAL)

REFUSAL TICKET

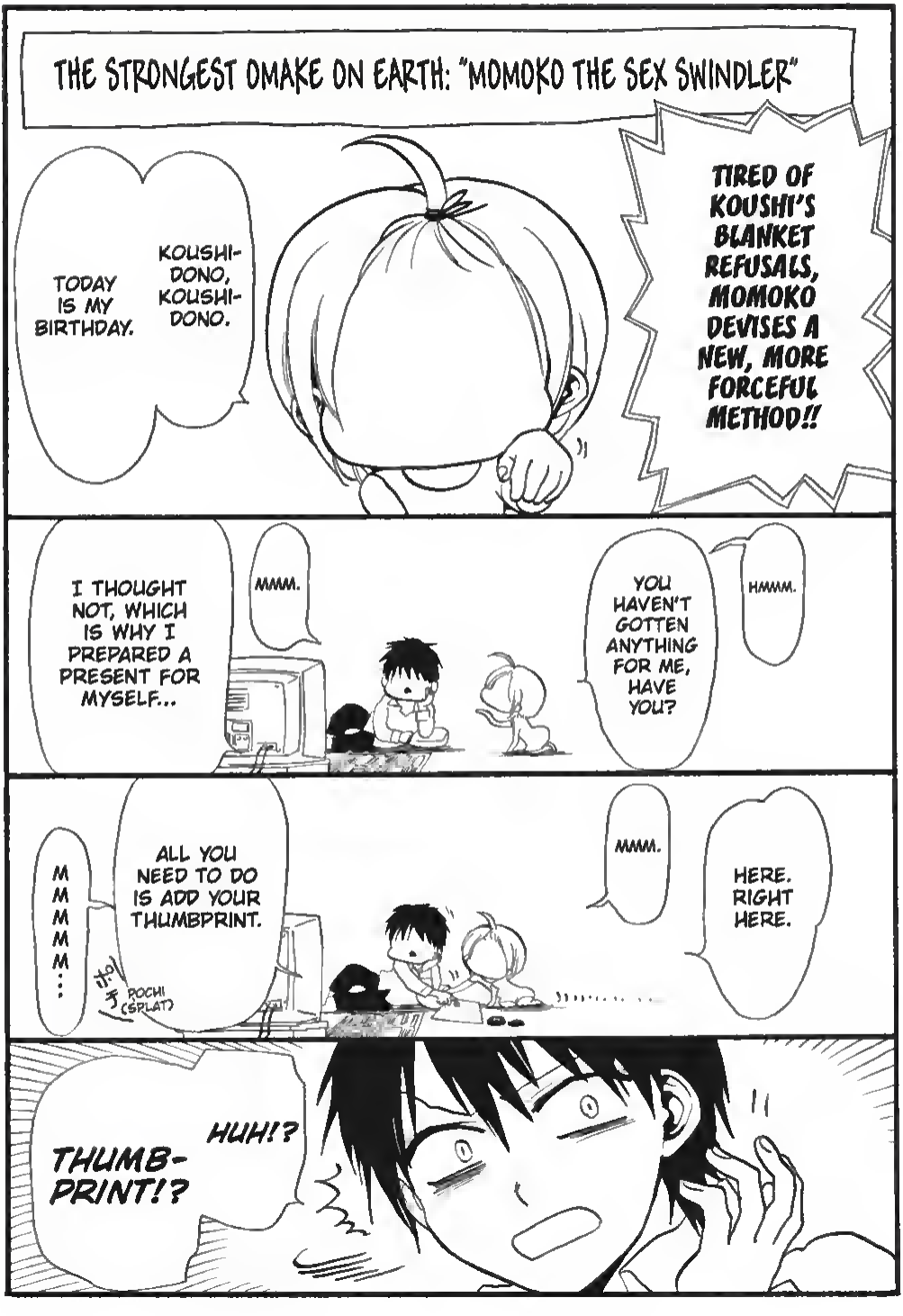
ALL-DAY DATE TICKET

REFUSAL TICKET

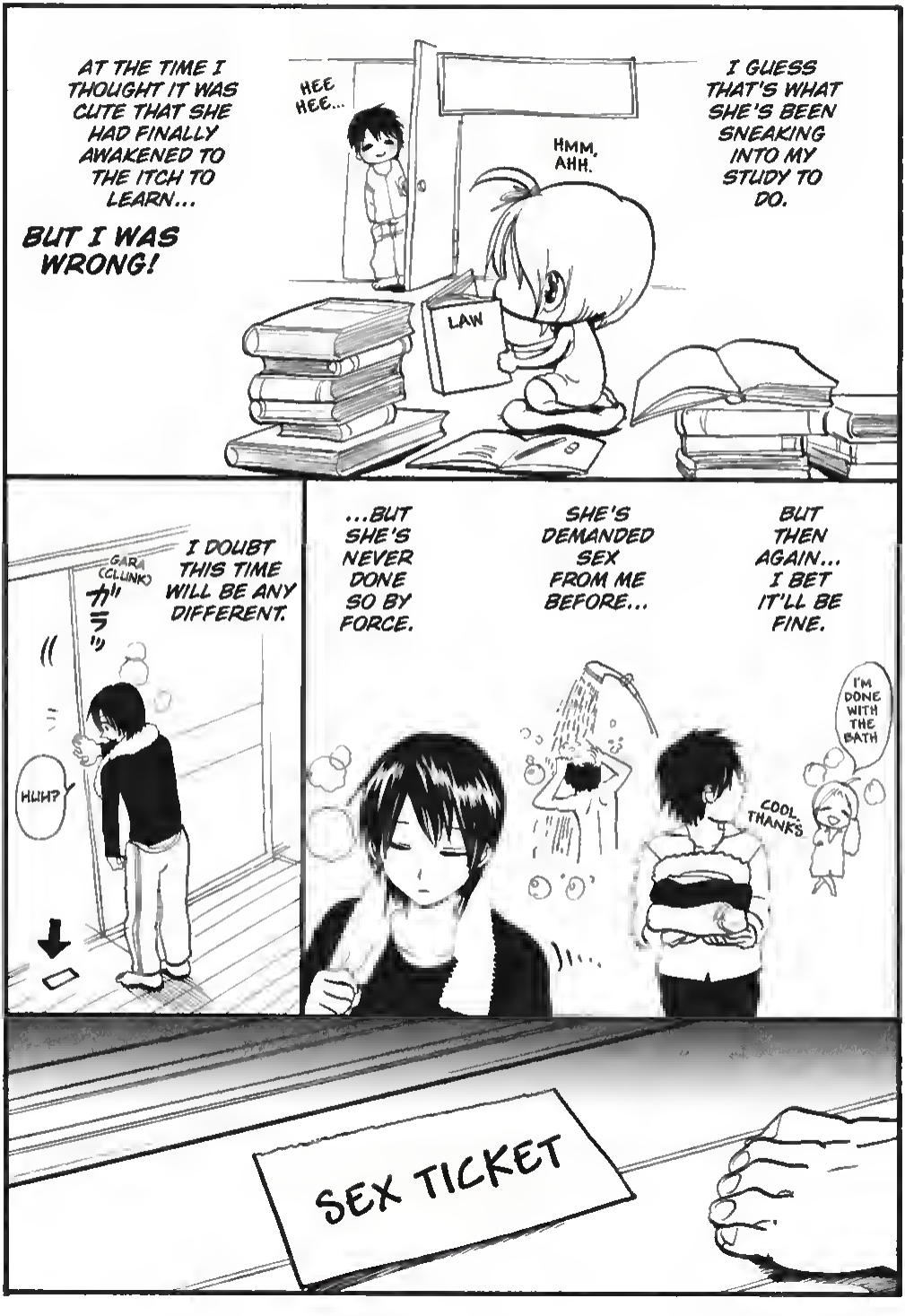
GOING TO SCHOOL HAND-IN-HAND TICKET

REFUSAL TICKET

MATCHING OUTFITS TICKET


THE STRONGEST OMAKE ON EARTH: "MOMOKO THE SEX SWINDLER"
TODAY IS MY BIRTHDAY.
KOUSHI-DONO, KOUSHI-DONO.
TIRED OF KOUSHI'S BLANKET REFUSALS, MOMOKO DEVISES A NEW, MORE FORCEFUL METHOD!!
I THOUGHT NOT, WHICH IS WHY I PREPARED A PRESENT FOR MYSELF...
MMM.
YOU HAVEN'T GOTTEN ANYTHING FOR ME, HAVE YOU?
HMMM.
MMMMM...
ALL YOU NEED TO DO IS ADD YOUR THUMBPRINT.
POCHI (SPLAT)
MMM.
HERE. RIGHT HERE.
THUMB-PRINT!?
HUH!?

YOU JUST MADE SEX COUPONS !!!
BAAAN (BOOM)
SEX TICKET
SEX TICKET
SEX TICKET
AHH!! YOU HAVE SEXUAL ENCOUNTER TICKETS!!
AND BREAKING THIS SACRED CONTRACT WOULD BE A TERRIBLE MOVE FOR A MAN ATTEMPTING TO GET INTO LAW, WOULDN'T IT...?
THESE ARE THE TICKETS OF MY DREAMS—A PIECE OF PAPER THAT GUARANTEES YOUR LOVE.
NOW IT'S OFFICIAL...? WHERE DID SHE LEARN TO BE SO DEVIOUS?
NYO HO HO HO!


AT THE TIME I THOUGHT IT WAS CUTE THAT SHE HAD FINALLY AWAKENED TO THE ITCH TO LEARN...
BUT I WAS WRONG!
HEE HEE...
HMM, AHH.
I GUESS THAT'S WHAT SHE'S BEEN SNEAKING INTO MY STUDY TO DO.
LAW
I DOUBT THIS TIME WILL BE ANY DIFFERENT.
GARA (CLUNK)
ガラッ
HUH?
...BUT SHE'S NEVER DONE SO BY FORCE.
SHE'S DEMANDED SEX FROM ME BEFORE...
BUT THEN AGAIN... I BET IT'LL BE FINE.
I'M DONE WITH THE BATH
COOL. THANKS
SEX TICKET

SUU (FWOO)
スー
HAA (HAHH)
ハー
SUU
スー
HAA
ハー
WHEN AM I GETTING NAILED, KOUSHI-DONO!!?
SUU
スー
HAA
ハー
PISHA (SLAM)
ピシャッ

OH, CRAP...
SHE'S DEAD SERIOUS!!
WAIT. THERE'S SOMETHING WE NEED TO DO FIRST.
WELL, KOUSHI-DONO...?
I NEED TO COME UP WITH A PLAN!
I'M IN DANGER TONIGHT.
OUR FATHERS HAVE ALREADY AGREED TO IT.
ALL WE NEED IS YOUR THUMB-PRINT TO SEAL THE DEAL!
YES. HERE'S THE CONSENT FORM.
IS THAT TRUE?
...THE LAW REQUIRES THE CONSENT OF A PARENT OR GUARDIAN ON BOTH SIDES...
FOR MINORS LIKE US TO ENGAGE IN SEXUAL ACTIVITY...
...AND... IF YOU'LL TRULY ACCEPT ME FOR WHO I AM...!!
I DON'T WANT THERE TO BE ANY COERCION HERE. I WANT TO KNOW YOUR TRUE FEELINGS...
THAT'S RIGHT...
AND THEN... WE WILL FINALLY BE ONE?
OHHH...

THEN I NEED YOUR PRINT RIGHT HERE!!
BI (FLIP)
ビッ
GABU (CHOMP)
ガブッ
BUCHI (RIP)
ブチッ
BUCHI
ブチブチブチ
WITH PLEASURRRE!!
MWA-HA-HA! YOU FELL FOR IT, SUCKER!!
WHAAAT!?
ZUBAAN (KAPOW)
ズバーン
NIYARI (SMIRK)
ニヤリ

PLAY SOCCER WITH NII-CHAN TICKET	THREE HOURS OF GIRL GAMES IN ONE DAY TICKET	ONE MANLY PUNCH TICKET
SAY "YOU'RE THE BEST, NII-CHAN" TICKET	ALL-YOU-CAN-WATCH LATE NIGHT ANIME TICKET	ONE MANLY FRIENDSHIP THROUGH FISTS TICKET
SAY "OH MY GOD, NII-CHAN IS SUPER-DUPER AWESOME!!" TICKET	FIVE DVD RENTALS IN ONE MONTH TICKET	ONE MANLY FRIENDSHIP IN THE SUNSET TICKET
DON'T PRETEND NII-CHAN IS A STRANGER IN FRONT OF YOUR FRIENDS TICKET	ONE TRIP FOR TWO TO DEATH-NIN LAND TICKET	ONE MANLY WASHING EACH OTHERS' BACKS TICKET

SUMOMOMO MOMOMO⑪

Shinobu Ohtaka

Translation: Stephen Paul

Lettering: Terri Delgado

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Yen Press
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First Yen Press ebook Edition: April 2014

ebook ISBN: 978-0-316-24126-7

App ISBN: 978-0-316-24127-4